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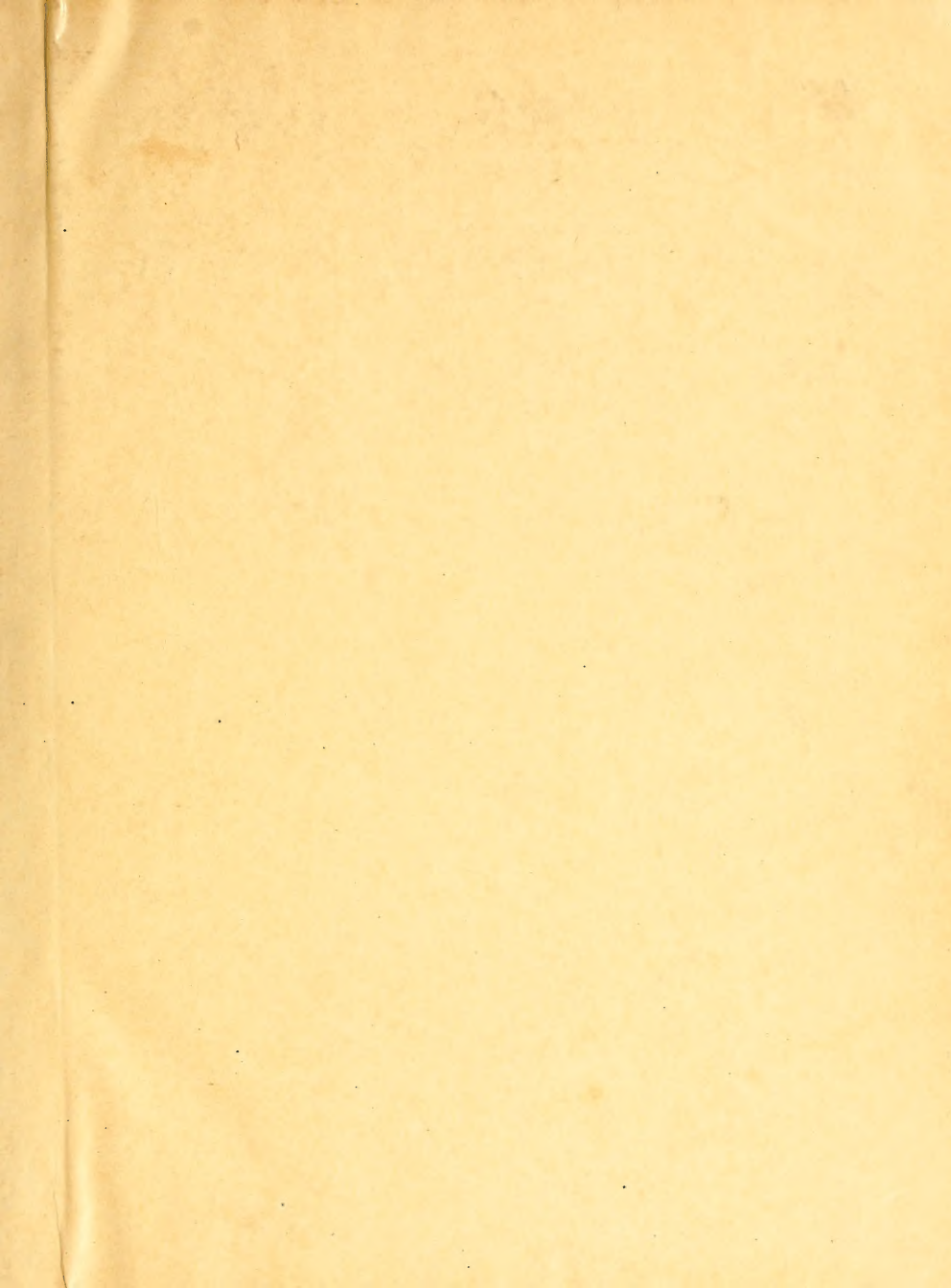
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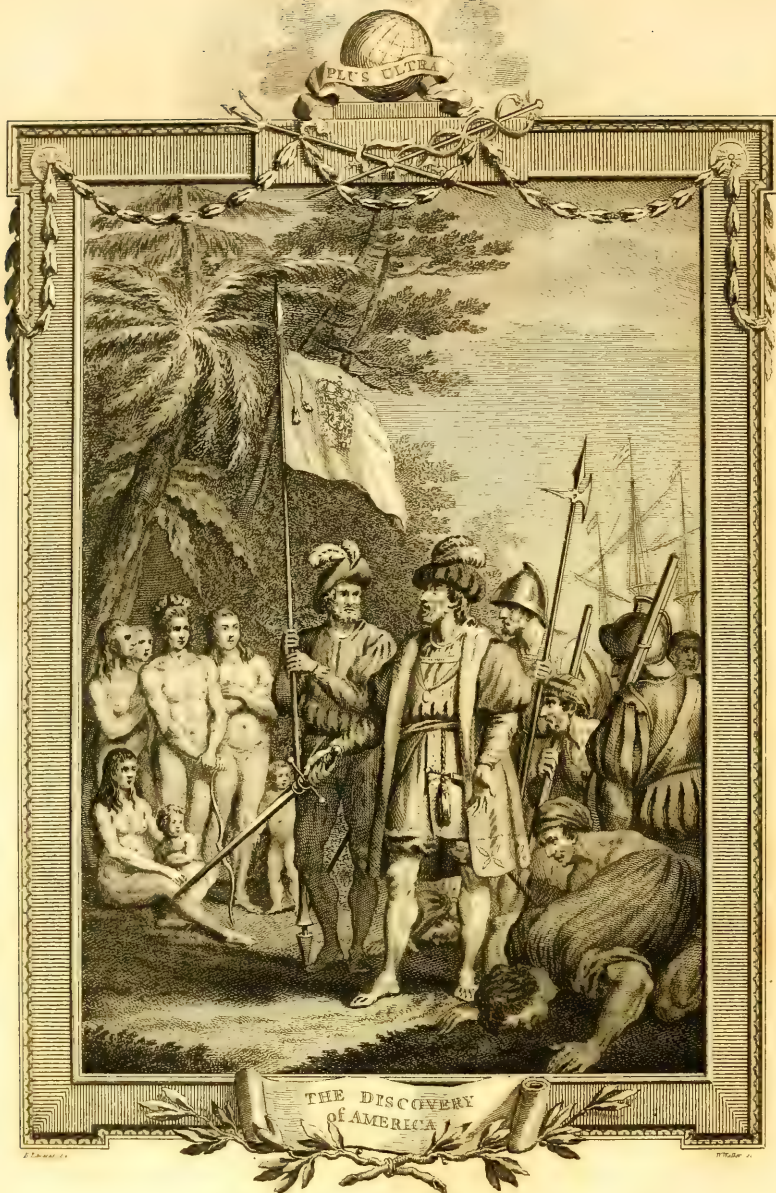
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THE
HISTORY OF AMERICA,

FROM ITS
DISCOVERY BY COLUMBUS

TO THE
CONCLUSION OF THE LATE WAR.

WITH AN
APPENDIX,

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF
THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE PRESENT UNHAPPY CONTEST
BETWEEN
GREAT BRITAIN AND HER COLONIES.

BY WILLIAM RUSSELL, ESQ. OF GRAY'S-INN.

IN
VOLUME I.

L O N D O N :

Printed for FIELDING and WALKER, No. 20, PATER-NOSTER-ROW.

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A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE Discovery of America, if we consider its consequences, is the most important event in the history of mankind. The gold and silver imported from the New World into Spain, entirely changed, in a few years, the value of money, and the price of labour all over Europe. The colonies, especially those of England, planted in the American islands, and on the Continent, have increased the number of the civilized part of the human species: they have supplied the inhabitants of our quarter of the globe with a variety of commodities, formerly unknown, or very rare, which contribute to the more comfortable enjoyment of life, as well as to the extension of trade; and by the consumption of European manufactures, they have furnished a subsistence to many thousands of European artizans, who could not otherwise have found employment. The number of mariners was suddenly increased; the science of navigation was perfected; and double the former number of ships have long navigated the ocean, laden alternately with the commodities of each hemisphere. Europeans engrossed the trade of the earth.

But if that spirit of independency, which has broke out with such violence in the British settlements, and is said to have spread itself over the whole American continent, should be able to accomplish its aim, the state of commerce, already much altered, must undergo a total revolution. The colonies, instead of depending on the mother-countries, will themselves become manufacturers; unrestrained by commercial laws, they will waft their commodities to every quarter of the globe, and receive what they want in exchange: they will become our rivals in the markets of Europe, and also in the trade of the East and West-Indies. The treasures of Mexico and Peru, in such event, will no longer flow into Spain, but will circulate through that continent where they have their source, in exchange for its different commodities and manufactures; and this circulation will give activity to every branch of trade, and vigour to every species of industry; while the commerce of Europe, deprived of its vivifying principle, will sink into a state of expiring languor. Her luxuries, unfed by the fountain that produced them, will prey upon her vitals; and her present lucrative trade to India, when that of America is lost, will prove not only unprofitable but ruinous. The gold and silver of the Western World alone can enable us to purchase the precious commodities of the East.

At this crisis, when new republics are forming, and new empires bursting into birth, the HISTORY of AMERICA becomes peculiarly interesting. We are naturally led to inquire, by what train of circumstances

stances settlements so lately founded have arrived at such a degree of wealth and power as to attempt new establishments, in defiance of the arms of a great nation. Nor will the issue of the present struggle, between Great Britain and her colonies, should it ever prove in favour of the parent state, entirely subvert the order of things: it will only retard, for a few years, events that would now have taken place, unless the spirit of independency should be finally extinguished. By the assistance of foreign troops, we may possibly be able to subdue our refractory fellow subjects; but we must be able to inspire them with new sentiments, before we can hold them in subjection. The termination, however, of this contest, the most unhappy in which England ever was engaged, will mark an important æra in the history of Europe, as well as of America.

But though the progress of commerce and colonization, and the different wars which they have occasioned, are the chief objects of this history, they are not its sole purpose. The discovery of America not only brought to view a vast continent, and islands of whose existence mankind had formerly no conception, but where every plant, and tree, and animal, was different from those of the ancient hemisphere. It offered to human contemplation a spectacle equally new and astonishing; alike singular and grand. Nature appeared there in all her rude magnificence. Immense forests, untrod but by the foot of the hunter, and where the axe had never exerted its power; extensive plains, without any traces of culture, large lakes, great rivers, and enormous mountains, are the distinguishing features of America. That savage and simple state, which was known only in our continent by the fanciful descriptions of poets, actually existed in the other. Man, in the New World, appeared under the rudest form in which we can conceive him to subsist: he was not only a stranger to the refinements in policy and arts, but the Mexicans and Peruvians excepted, almost unacquainted with property; he was in the first stage of his being. To follow him in his progress, as he gradually advances from this infant state of civil life to its maturity; to observe at each period how the faculties of his understanding unfold; to attend to the efforts of his active powers; to watch the motions of the affections as they arise in his heart, and mark whither they tend, and with what ardour they are excited, are objects of which the writers of ancient Greece and Rome had but an imperfect view, but which are fully presented to the historian of America, and will form not the least interesting part of the following work.



North Pole



T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
A M E R I C A.

B O O K I.

The DISCOVERY of AMERICA, and the CONQUEST of the two great
Empires of MEXICO and PERU, by the SPANIARDS.

C H A P. I.

*The Progress of Commerce and Navigation, from the earliest Accounts, to the Discovery of the
NEW WORLD.*

IN order to prepare the mind of the reader for the various scenes that unfold themselves in the following history, it will be necessary to give some account of the progress of navigation, prior to the discovery of America; and as that event was followed by a signal revolution in the commercial world, it will also be satisfactory to trace the progress of commerce to the same memorable æra. BOOK I.

That great body of water which every where surrounds the earth, and so frequently intersects it, to the eye of untutored man, seems intended to obstruct that intercourse which Providence designed it to facilitate. Men must have lived several ages together, and have made considerable progress in science, as well as in the mechanical arts, before they could construct vessels of such a size, and navigate them with so much skill, as to consider the ocean as beneficial to the interests of society. They must also have experienced a variety of wants: they must have perceived the riches of other countries, and the poverty of their own; and they must have been sensible of the general advantages that might be derived



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BOOK I.

from an exchange of commodities, in consequence of which the wants of one country would be supplied by the superfluities of another, before they turned their minds to the study of navigation, or their industry to the building of ships. The soil must ill have required their culture, where first they thought of ploughing the main; and the game and the fruits of the forest must have been few, where first they resolved to fell its trees, and convert its timber into a vessel, in which they might commit themselves to the mercy of the winds and waves.

Experience justifies this conjecture. The barren coast of Phœnicia produced the first eminent ship-builders, and the rock of Tyre the first navigators of any note. Navigation soon made the Phœnicians acquainted with all the advantages of commerce. The industry and ingenuity of the people compensated for the barrenness of the soil: they carried every species of manufacture to the greatest perfection then known; the city of Tyre became the principal emporium in the ancient world. Thither resorted the merchants of all nations; and Phœnician vessels not only frequented all the ports in the Mediterranean, but passing the Straits of Gades *, visited the western coasts of Spain and Africa. There they disposed of their rich fabrics, and received in return the necessaries of life, or the rude materials of industry, from countries more abounding in natural superfluities, or nations less advanced in the arts.

Nor was this enterprising people satisfied with these advantages. Having made themselves masters of Elath, and other commodious harbours in the Arabian Gulph or Red Sea, they established a trade with Arabia and India on the one hand, and Ethiopia on the other. From the different ports of these countries, to which their ships regularly resorted, but especially from India, they imported many precious commodities, and enjoyed for several ages, without a rival, the lucrative trade of the East. These commodities were carried over land from Elath to Rhinocolura, the nearest port in the Mediterranean; where being re-shipped, they were transported to Tyre, or to Sidon, a city scarcely less eminent on the same coast; and from those marts they were distributed through Europe, Asia, and Africa, as far as travelling was practicable or navigation known †.

The Carthaginians, a colony from Phœnicia, inherited the commercial spirit of their parent state, and applied to navigation with no less ardour and success. But though Carthage early rivalled, and soon surpassed Tyre in wealth and power, the Phœnicians continued to enjoy the exclusive possession of the trade to India. The mercantile activity of the Carthaginians took another direction; their navigation extended itself chiefly towards the west and north. They not only visited the coasts of Spain, but also those of Gaul and Britain; and pushing their hardiness yet farther, they sailed along the western coast of Africa, where they planted several colonies, and launching into the Atlantic ocean, discovered the Canaries or Fortunate islands, supposed to be the utmost limits of ancient navigation in the western main ‡.

* Now known by the name of the Straits of Gibraltar.

† Strabon. Geog. lib. xvi. Diod. Sicul. lib. i.

‡ Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 37.

The Greeks, notwithstanding the favourable situation of their country, almost encompassed by the sea, which formed many spacious bays and commodious harbours, and though surrounded by fertile islands, were late in making any considerable progress in navigation. Even in their most improved state, they hardly carried on any commerce beyond the limits of the Mediterranean. Their chief intercourse was with the colonies of their countrymen planted in Asia Minor, in Italy, and Sicily; though they sometimes visited the ports of Egypt, of Gaul, and of Thrace; or passing through the Hellespont, now the Dardanelles, traded with the countries situated around the Euxine or Black Sea ††.

But the expedition of Alexander the Great into Asia, enlarged the sphere of Grecian navigation, and was followed by a revolution in the commercial world, no less remarkable than that which it produced in the political. That extraordinary man, whose genius fitted him equally for conquest and dominion, had no sooner accomplished the destruction of Tyre, and reduced Egypt to subjection, than he founded a great city, to which he gave his own name, and which he proposed to make the centre of commerce, as well as the seat of empire. This city was situated near one of the mouths of the river Nile, that by the Mediterranean sea, and the neighbourhood of the Arabian gulph, it might command the trade both of the East and West; and that situation was chosen with so much discernment, that Alexandria soon became, what Tyre had been, the greatest emporium in the ancient world*.

But the ambition of Alexander was not satisfied with having opened to his countrymen a communication with India by sea; he aspired at the sovereignty of that rich territory, and conducted an army thither by land. Enterprising however as he was, he may be said rather to have discovered, than to have conquered it. His rash expedition served only to make him more sensible of its importance, and his immature death prevented any second attempt to subdue it. But the Indian trade established at Alexandria continued to flourish, not only under the Grecian monarchs of Egypt, but after that kingdom was subjected to the Roman power. It even survived the Roman empire itself, whose declining majesty it had contributed to sustain, and was never totally ruined, till the discovery of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope †: so great was the sagacity, and foresight of the Macedonian hero, who has been branded with the name of madman by one eminent writer ‡, and compared with a common highwayman by another §!

The progress of the Romans in commerce and navigation was still more slow, and less considerable than that of the Greeks. Their military education, the genius of the people, and the spirit of their laws, all tended to estrange them from mercantile pursuits. The necessity of opposing a formidable rival, not any commercial views, first made them aim at naval power; and it was the de-

†† Huer. Hist. du Commerce des Anciens.

* Diod. Sicul. lib. xviii. c. 1. Arrian. de Expedit. Alex. lib. vii. c. 27, 28. Strab. Geog. lib. xvii.

† Mun's Discourses on the East-India Commerce.

‡ Pope.

§ Hawkefworth.

BOOK I.

fire of bending all nations under one yoke, not of uniting them by mutual interest in the exchange of goods, that prompted them to aspire at the dominion of the sea, which they had found to be inseparably connected with that of the land. Even after the Roman arms had subdued all the maritime states in the ancient world; when Carthage, Greece, and Egypt, had submitted to their power, and when the subversion of the republic had softened the severity, and brought down the stateliness of ancient manners, commerce did not rise to any high degree of estimation among the Romans. The trade of the conquered countries was suffered to remain almost entirely in the hands of the natives, and continued to flow in its former channels.

But kingdoms and commonwealths, when reduced to the form of provinces, could not retain the enterprising spirit of independent states; nor could the additional security which commerce is supposed * to have received from the extent of the Roman authority, or the vigilant inspection of the Roman magistrates, compensate for the want of that spirit. Rome was indeed a market for every luxury; but every province was a state prison: and the wealth of the whole empire was wasted to Italy, where it was wasted in voluptuous profusion. "One, indeed, superintending power, moved and regulated the industry of mankind, and enjoyed the fruits of their joint efforts †;" but that power, like a spring rendered feeble by its length, was unable, though unrestrained by any partial obstructions or interfering force, to communicate vigour to the complicated machine. If navigation, therefore, received any improvements under the Roman dominion, they must have arisen from the natural progress of the human mind, not from any advantages peculiar to the Roman government, which was a like despotic, oppressive, and debasing.

The Romans however, notwithstanding their disinclination to naval affairs, greatly contributed, by their victorious armies, to extend the intercourse of nations, as well as the knowledge of unknown lands and seas. Previous to their conquests, the civilized nations of antiquity had no communication with those countries in Europe, which now form its most opulent and powerful kingdoms. The interior parts of Spain and Gaul were little known; Britain, except by its northern neighbours, had only been visited by a few Carthaginian merchants; and the name of Germany had scarcely been heard of on the other side of the Alps. Into all these countries the Roman armies penetrated, and the greater part of them they subdued. Nor was the progress of the Romans less considerable in the other quarters of the globe. In Africa, they acquired a considerable knowledge of all the countries that stretch along the coast of the Mediterranean, from the mouth of the Nile to the Straits of Gibraltar. In Asia, they not only made themselves masters of most of the provinces that composed the Persian and Macedonian empires, but, after their victories over Mithridates and Tigranes, they seem to have surveyed the countries contiguous to the Caspian and Euxine seas, more accurately than they had been formerly, and to

* Robertson, Hist. America, Book i. † Id. *ibid.*

have carried on a more extensive trade than that of the Greeks, with the opulent and commercial nations then seated around the latter †.

Such was the progress of commerce, navigation, and discovery among the ancients, from the first dawn of civilization, to the full establishment of the Roman empire, the most enlightened æra in the ancient world; from which it appears, that they were but very imperfectly acquainted even with that portion of the earth which was known to them. They were almost entirely ignorant of those vast countries in the north of Europe, which are at present subject to the kings of Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Prussia, and those which belong to the Russian empire. With the north of Asia, and the greater part of Africa, they were still less acquainted; and the fertile and opulent countries of India, beyond the Ganges, were to them regions unexplored.

That part of India, now known by the name of the Malabar coast, appears to have been the utmost limit of ancient navigation in the East, as the Canaries were in the West. Nor is the narrowness of these boundaries by any means to be wondered at, if we reflect that the ancients were unacquainted with that property of the magnet, which makes it point to the poles, and consequently with the mariner's compass. Destitute of this faithful guide, which now conducts the pilot with so much certainty in the unbounded ocean, they durst seldom quit sight of land, but crept timidly along the coast, exposed to all the dangers, and retarded by all the obstructions, unavoidable in holding such an awkward course, doubling every stormy cape, and becalmed in every bay. They had no other method of regulating their direction, but by observing the sun and stars; and when these disappeared, during the darkness of night, when the heavens were involved in clouds, their course was necessarily retarded. Hence many years were requisite for performing voyages which are now accomplished in a few months; and the vessels being small and shallow, in order to avoid the rocks and shoals, and depending as much for their navigation upon oars as sails, every part of the nautical art was of consequence imperfect*.

Other causes conspired to retard the progress of discovery among the ancients. They supposed all that portion of the earth which lies between the tropics, or what they called the torrid zone, now found to yield both the necessities and the comforts of life in the most luxurious profusion, to be not only uninhabitable by man, but the region of perpetual sterility. Nor was this wild opinion peculiar to the ignorant vulgar; it was adopted by the most enlightened philosophers and best informed geographers, who only differed about the extent of the void and uninhabitable space, some confining it to twelve, others to eight degrees on each side of the equator. They even believed the heat of the torrid zone to be so excessive, as to prove an insuperable barrier against all intercourse between the inhabitants of the two temperate regions of the

† Robertson, *Hist. America*, book i.

* *Hist. Philos. et Polit. des Etablissements, &c. des Europ. dans le deux Indes*, par l'Abbé Raynal, liv. i. *Hist. Amer.* b. i.

BOOK I.

earth *. Men consequently were not likely to prosecute discovery, at the hazard of their lives, where the soil was supposed to produce nothing that could recompense them for the danger to which they must expose themselves.

But rude as the art of navigation was, even in its most improved state, among the ancients, it became still more imperfect during the decline of the Roman power, and the knowledge of remote countries still more confined. That languor and feebleness, which have been already mentioned, as resulting from the extent of the Roman empire, encouraged the barbarous nations, who had been expelled to the north of Europe and of Asia, to assemble their armies on its frontiers; to circumscribe its dominion; to dismember, and at last to overturn it. The arts and sciences of the Romans perished with their empire, and Europe may be said to have returned to a second infancy in knowledge and civilization. The barbarous invaders, consisting of various tribes, differing from each other in language and customs, parcelled out their conquests into many small independent states, jealous of their freedom, and between whose members no intercourse subsisted. Habituated to the severities of a military life, averse to industry, and unacquainted with the arts, they had few wants to supply, and no superfluities to dispose of. All commerce between nations ceased; and not only the knowledge of distant countries was lost, but almost their very names were forgot in Europe †.

This great revolution, the most memorable in the history of human affairs, is supposed to have been partly occasioned by the vanity or caprice of Constantine, who transferred the seat of government from Rome to Byzantium, to which he gave his own name, and which continued to flourish long after the capital of the world was in ruins. But if Italy and the western provinces became less secure by the removal of the imperial seat, Greece and the eastern provinces, certainly the most valuable, were better defended in consequence of that event. Constantinople, though often threatened, escaped the destructive rage of the barbarians, who spread desolation over the rest of Europe. In that city, the knowledge of ancient arts and discoveries was preserved, together with a taste for elegance and splendour; and commerce, with its necessary attendant, navigation, which alone can furnish the luxuries of foreign countries, was prosecuted with vigour and success. The merchants of Constantinople not only traded to the islands of the Archipelago, and the adjacent coast of Asia, but imported the precious commodities of India, by the way of Alexandria. Even after Egypt was subjected to the sword of the Saracens, and the navigation of the Red Sea cut off, the ingenuity of the Greeks, or Romans as they affected to call themselves, found out a new channel, through which the produce and the manufactures of India were conveyed to Constantinople. They were carried up the river Indus, as far as it is navigable; thence they were transported, by land, to the

* Cicero, *Somn. Scip.* c. vi. Plin. lib. ii. Strabo, lib. ii.

† Robertson, *Hist. Charles V.* vol. I. *Hist. Amer.* b. i.

banks of the Oxus, and proceeded down that river to the Caspian sea; crossing which, they entered the Volga, and sailing up it, were carried by land to the Tanais, which conducted them into the Euxine or Black Sea, where vessels of a larger size, from Constantinople, waited their arrival *: or, according to other accounts, they were carried, by a shorter course, up the river Cyrus, and down the Phasis; Serpana, on the banks of the latter, which empties itself in the Euxine sea, being only five days journey from the stream of the former †: but both channels were most probably taken advantage of, and more or less pursued at different times, as the Greeks happened to be at peace or war with the nations on the banks of the several rivers.

The trade with India was carried on through these, and other less considerable channels, from the seventh to the eleventh century, during which time, Constantinople continued to be the centre of the commerce of the East and West. Before the latter period, however, Europe began to emerge from that barbarism in which it had been plunged by the fall of the Roman empire. The rude tribes who had settled in its different provinces, but especially in the maritime parts of Italy, having acquired by degrees some relish for the comforts of civil life, foreign commerce was revived, industry and emulation were excited, and the intercourse between nations was restored.

Even prior to this æra, some attempts had been made at naval power, by Charlemagne in France, and Alfred the Great in England. The necessity of opposing the Normans or Danes, as they were occasionally called, who made their attacks by sea, and were considered as lords of the ocean, roused the attention of those two enlightened and powerful princes; and several Italian cities took steps no less vigorous, proportioned to their force, in order to oppose the invasions of the Saracens.

The marine of France and England, especially that of the former, went to decay under the successors of Alfred and Charlemagne; but the activity of the Italians, being once awakened, never remitted its efforts. They turned their minds from war to commerce: navigation flourished among them; and they became the carriers, the bankers, and the factors of Europe and of Asia. Constantinople was the chief mart to which they at first resorted. There they were supplied both with the precious commodities of the East, and with many curious manufactures, the product of the ancient arts and ingenuity that still remained among the Greeks, or which they had learned to fabricate by their intercourse with India. These they distributed over Europe; and communicated insensibly, to its various nations, a taste for arts and manufactures, of which they had hitherto had no conception ‡.

* Huët, *Hist. du Com. des Anciens*. Ramusio. Robertson, *Hist. Amer.* b. i.

† *Mod. Univ. Hist.* vol. IV. fol. edit. *Hist. Philos. et Polit. des Etablissements, &c. des Européens dans le deux Indes*, par l'Abbé Raynal, liv. i. c. 6.

‡ Murat. *Antiquit. Ital.* vol. II.

BOOK I.

The corruption of the Greeks favoured the industry and enterprising spirit of the Italians. Enervated by luxury, and sunk in indolence, to which they were allured by a debasing superstition, the citizens of Constantinople not only resigned to the Italian states the trade of Europe, but also permitted them to make themselves masters imperceptibly of that of Asia. Become rich and powerful by transporting the merchandize of the Greeks, the subtle Italians began to attempt establishments for themselves, at the expence of their employers, and to fabricate those curious manufactures, which they had hitherto been obliged to purchase at an enormous price. The Genoese not only settled a colony in the very suburbs of Constantinople, but got possession of Caffa in Crim Tartary, with the trade to India by the Caspian and Euxine seas. The Venetians, Florentines, and Pisans, found means to carry on the same trade by the way of the Red Sea. The foldans of Egypt, become more enlightened than their predecessors, who had burnt the famous Alexandrian library, encouraged a commerce, which they saw would be attended with many lucrative advantages; and the Italian powers, but especially the Venetians, notwithstanding their aversion to the Mahometans, and the insults to which they were exposed, continued to prosecute it from the same motives. The ancient port of Alexandria was revived, and the trade of India flowed once more in the channel marked out for it by the penetrating and enlightened founder of that city †.

The Crusades, or military expeditions to the East, in order to deliver the Holy Land from the dominion of the Infidels, also conspired to increase the commerce and maritime power of the Italians. They alone were acquainted with the navigation of the Mediterranean, or possessed vessels of sufficient size to transport into Asia the multitudes that enlisted themselves in those enthusiastic enterprizes. They were therefore employed by the kings of France, England, and other countries, to carry thither their armies. They supplied them, while there, with provisions and military stores; and in consequence of these services, they not only became possessed of immense sums of money, but obtained commercial privileges and establishments of great consequence, in the conquests made by the champions of the cross, on the sea-coasts of Syria and Palestine*.

Nor were the commercial effects of the Crusades confined to the Italian states. The other European nations, by their expeditions into Asia, became acquainted with remote regions, which they formerly knew only by name, or by the reports of ignorant and credulous pilgrims; and as the first rendezvous of the armies of the cross was commonly in Italy, and the second in the plains of Dalmatia, whence they marched by land to Constantinople, they had an opportunity of observing the manners, the arts, and the accommodations, of people more polished

† Huet, *Hist. du Com. des Anc.* Elmacin, *Hist. Sar.* *Hist. Philos. des Etabliss. &c.* par Raynal, liv. i. Robertson, *Hist. Amer.* b. i.

* Murat. *Antiquit. Ital.* vol. II. *Mod. Univ. Hist.* vol. IV. fol. edit. Robertson, *Hist.* Charles V. vol. I.

than themselves. Even in Asia, where the caliphs had diffused knowledge and civilization through their empire, those pious warriors found arts and improvements to which they were strangers. Their views enlarged; their prejudices wore off; new ideas crowded into their minds; and as a close intercourse between the East and West subsisted from the beginning of the twelfth, till towards the close of the thirteenth century, during which period new armies were continually marching from Europe into Asia, while former adventurers returning home, communicated to their countrymen the knowledge they had acquired, and the habits of life they had contracted by residing among more refined nations, a taste for pomp, for pleasure, and amusement, together with a bolder spirit of enterprise, gradually diffused itself over Europe. The principal maritime states not only encouraged the resort of foreigners to their harbours, but began to perceive the advantage of applying to commerce themselves, and the necessity of importing those precious commodities, which they were obliged to purchase at an enormous and discretionary price from others †.

The commercial spirit awakened in the North about the middle of the thirteenth century. The cities of Hamburg and Lubec having opened some trade with the nations then situated around the Baltic, found themselves obliged to enter into a league of mutual defence against the pirates who infested that sea. The advantages derived from this union determined other cities to join in the confederacy; and, in a short time, eighty of the most considerable towns, scattered through those vast countries which stretch from the bottom of the Baltic to Cologne upon the Rhine, united in the famous Hanseatic league, which became so formidable, that its alliance was courted, and its enmity dreaded by the greatest monarchs ‡.

The members of this powerful association, who formed the first systematic plan of commerce known in modern times, exchanged the naval stores, and other bulky commodities of the North, with the Italians or Lombards, as they were then generally called, for the productions of India and the manufactures of Italy. Flanders was the theatre of these operations; navigation being still so imperfect, that a voyage between the Baltic and Mediterranean seas could not be performed in one summer. A magazine or store-house, half way between the commercial cities in the North and those of Italy, was therefore necessary. Bruges was pitched upon as the most convenient situation; and as that city became the centre of commerce between the Lombard and Hanseatic merchants, the Flemings traded with both in that city to such extent as well as advantage, as spread among them a general habit of industry, which long rendered Flanders and the adjacent provinces the most opulent, the most populous, and the best cultivated countries in Europe. They monopolized almost entirely, during three centuries, the two

† Ut supra.

Anderfon, Hist. Com. vol. I. Robertson, Hist. Charles V. vol. I.

BOOK I.

great manufactures of wool and flax, which seem to have been considerable in the Netherlands as far back as the age of Charlemagne *.

Soon after this regular intercourse was opened between the north and south of Europe, a fortunate discovery was made, which contributed more than all the efforts and ingenuity of preceding ages, to improve and to extend navigation. That wonderful property of the magnet, by which it communicates a virtue so extraordinary to a needle, or slender rod of iron, as to point towards the poles of the earth, was observed. The use which might be made of this discovery, in directing navigation, was immediately perceived; and that invaluable, though now familiar instrument, the mariner's compass, was framed.

When navigators found, that, by means of the compass, they could at all times, and in every place, discover the north and south with ease and accuracy, it became no longer necessary to depend merely on the light of the stars and the observation of the sea-coast. They gradually abandoned their ancient timid and lingering course along the shore, ventured boldly into the ocean, and relying on this new guide, could steer in the darkest night, and under the most cloudy sky, with a security and precision hitherto unknown †.

Lisbon and Alexandria, however, continued to mark the limits of modern navigation, till the beginning of the fourteenth century; when the Spaniards, by what accident we are not told, discovered the Canaries or Fortunate Islands. These islands were known to the Carthaginians, and are supposed, as has been already observed, to be the utmost stretch of ancient navigation in the western ocean: nor did the moderns advance beyond them, till the beginning of the fifteenth century. But before that æra, many events had conspired to rouse the minds of men to enterprise, and to extend their knowledge of the habitable globe.

The crusades, by opening a communication between the East and West, not only taught the European princes the value of a naval force, and afforded them an opportunity of gaining a more perfect knowledge than they could otherwise have acquired of the situation, produce, and extent of the great monarchies in Asia, but awakened a general passion for adventures as well as a spirit of commerce. In consequence of this passion, several persons advanced far beyond the countries where the champions of the Cross carried on their operations, travelling by land into the more remote and opulent regions of the East. The irruptions of the Tartars, under Jenghiz Khan and Tamerlane, also contributed to the same effect. These two rapid conquerors, who, from obscure beginnings, rose to the highest pinnacle of human greatness, who broke, at different times, the Mahometan power, and made themselves masters of almost all Asia, from the frontiers of Russia to the extremity of India, received several embassies from the pope and the Christian princes; and though the persons deputed on such occasions were ge-

* Ut supra. See also Lud. Guic. Descrip. di Paesi Bassi.

† Collinas et Trombellus de Acus Nauticæ Invent. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. i.

nerally monks, and consequently little qualified for describing the countries or the people they visited, yet several useful informations were obtained by their means relative to regions formerly unknown in Europe*.

Some were induced, by commercial motives, to follow the Tartar camp or court, among whom was the celebrated Marco Polo of Venice; and some entered voluntarily into the armies of Jenghiz and Tamerlane, that they might have an opportunity of taking vengeance on the Saracens and Turks, the great enemies of the Christian name†; whilst others, and in particular our countryman Sir John Mandeville, prompted by mere curiosity, visited the interior and remote parts both of Asia and Africa‡. Polo penetrated as far east as Cambalu, or Peking, the capital of the great kingdom of Cathay or China, subject at that time to the successors of Jenghiz Khan. He made more than one voyage on the Indian ocean; he traded in many of its principal islands, from which Europe had long received spices, and other precious commodities, without knowing the particular countries to which it was indebted for those productions; and by the description which he furnished of Madagascar, and the neighbouring coasts of Africa, he gave reason to believe, that a passage to India by sea was not only possible but practicable||.

The coincidence of this conjecture with the reports of antiquity to the same purpose§, and the increasing demand for India commodities, made several princes and states think seriously of attempting such a passage. But the glory of that discovery was reserved for Portugal, one of the smallest and most inconsiderable of the European kingdoms. Many circumstances, however, conspired to animate the Portuguese to exert their activity in this new direction; and as these are intimately connected with the progress of navigation and commerce, as well as with the discovery of America, they shall here be particularly noticed.

Spain and Portugal had long been partly possessed by the Moors, against whom the Christians were engaged in perpetual wars. In consequence of these continued hostilities, the Portuguese acquired a martial and enterprising spirit, even beyond what was common in Europe during the middle ages. Before the end of the fourteenth century the Moors were finally expelled Portugal; and John I. surnamed the Bastard, being the natural son of the monarch he succeeded, obtained secure possession of the crown, by the peace concluded with Castile in 1411. He was a prince of great abilities, and by his superior courage and conduct had raised himself to that throne, on which he now found himself firmly seated. The struggles occasioned by the disputed succession, which involved the

* Recueil de diverses Voyages en Tartarie, &c. Leyd. 1730.

† Gerberon, Hist. de Tartares. Hist. de Timur Bec.

‡ Mandeville's Travels.

|| Viaggi di Marco Polo.

§ A Phœnician fleet is said to have sailed from a port in the Red Sea, round the southern promontory of Africa, to the Straits of Gades, and thence to the mouth of the Nile. Herodot. lib. iv. c. 42.

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kingdom at once in a civil and foreign war, had augmented the military ardour of the Portuguese; and John instantly perceived, that it would be impossible to preserve public or domestic tranquillity, without finding some employment for the restless and daring spirits naturally produced amid such convulsions*.

The situation of the kingdom, bounded on every side by the dominions of a more powerful neighbour, left no room for the activity of the Portuguese to exert itself by land. But Portugal is a maritime state, furnished with many commodious harbours: the people had begun to make some progress in navigation; and the sea being open, presented to them a spacious field of enterprise. John was fully sensible of this advantage, and took the most effectual means of profiting by it. The ancient hatred against the Moors was still strong in the breasts of his subjects: Lisbon is distant but a short way from the coast of Barbary; against the Moors there settled he projected an expedition; and having assembled a formidable armament, made himself master of the important fortress of Ceuta.

A. D. 1414.

The success of this expedition, though it afforded the Portuguese little reason to expect future conquests on the coast of Barbary, added strength to the spirit of enterprise in the nation, and pushed it on to new undertakings. Happily for Portugal, these were conducted by Henry duke of Viseo, third son of king John by Philippa of Lancaster, sister to Henry IV. of England. This prince had early applied himself to geography, astronomy, and all the sciences connected with navigation: he had accompanied his father in his African expedition, where he had distinguished himself by his valour; and he had afterwards relieved Ceuta, when besieged by the Moors, from whom and the Jews of Barbary he received some valuable informations relative to the south-west parts of Africa. On his return, he immediately retired from court, that he might devote his mind more particularly to his favourite study, and fixed his residence at Sagrez, in Algarve, near Cape St. Vincent, where the prospect of the Atlantic Ocean invited his thoughts continually towards those objects to which he wisely judged it might conduct the skilful navigator†.

A. D. 1415.

The natural ardour of Henry's genius was augmented by the progress of some vessels sent out by king John, while preparing for his enterprise against Ceuta. They not only doubled Cape Non, which, as its name imports, had hitherto been considered by navigators as a boundary that could not be passed, but proceeded an hundred and sixty miles beyond it, to Cape Bajadore. This new promontory, however, which stretches a considerable way into the Atlantic, appeared to the Portuguese commanders more dreadful than the one they had doubled. They durst not attempt to sail round it. But what to them seemed an insuperable barrier, proved only a spur to Henry's ambition. He fitted out a single ship, the command of which he gave to two gentlemen of his household, Gonzalez

A. D. 1418.

* Hist. de Portugal. Univ. Hist. vol. IV. fol. edit.

† Faria y Sousa, lib. iv. La Neuf. Mariana. Turquet.

Zarco and Trifstan Vaz, who had studied navigation under his eye. According to the timid mode of sailing, which still prevailed, they held their course along the shore; and by following that direction, they must have encountered insurmountable difficulties, in attempting to pass Cape Bajadore. But fortune came in aid to their inexperience, or want of skill: a squall of wind arose, drove them out to sea, and prevented that voyage from proving altogether fruitless. When they expected every moment to perish, they found themselves landed on an unknown island; which, from their lucky escape, or as others say, because they first saw it on the feast of All Saints, they named Porto Santo*.

A. D. 1418

Encouraged by this faint dawn of success, sufficient to animate a mind ardent in pursuit of a favourite object, Henry sent out next year three ships under the same commanders, to whom he joined Bartholomew Perestrelo, in order to take possession of the island already found. From Porto Santo they observed, towards the south, a fixed spot in the horizon, like a small black cloud: this, from some circumstances, they conjectured to be land; and by steering towards it, they arrived at a considerable island, which they denominated Madeira, on account its being covered with wood†.

A. D. 1419.

A. D. 1420.

The news of this second discovery no sooner reached Portugal, than prince Henry, whose chief aim, in projecting such voyages, was the benefit of his country, and the good of mankind, immediately sent out a colony, in order to people the new found islands; and his provident attention not only furnished the settlers with the seeds, plants, and domestic animals common in Europe, but also with slips of the vine of Cyprus, the rich wines of which were then in high request, and with plants of the sugar cane from Sicily, into which it had been lately introduced from Asia. Favoured by the warmth of the climate and the fertility of the soil, these exotics thrived so prosperously, and were cultivated with so much diligence, that the sugar and wine of Madeira soon became considerable articles in the trade of Portugal‡.

The Portuguese, by their voyages to Madeira, were gradually accustomed to a bolder navigation. Instead of creeping servilely along the shore, they ventured into the open sea: in consequence of holding such a course, Cape Bajadore was doubled; and in the space of a few years, all the coast of Africa, from Cape Blanco to Cape de Verd, was explored. The fame of the Portuguese discoveries spread over Europe: and prince Henry, sensible of their importance, procured from the pope, as the vice-gerent of Christ upon earth, a bull granting the crown of Portugal an exclusive right to all the countries, which were or should be discovered, from Cape Non to the continent of India||.

A. D. 1433.

A. D. 1444.

* Galvino's Discoveries. Maffæi, Hist. Indica.

† Alcafarus, Discov. Mad.

‡ Guicciardini, Descritt. de Paesi Bassi.

|| Spond. Ann. Ecc.

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This grant was accompanied with a clause, importing, that the Portuguese should in all their expeditions, endeavour to spread the knowledge of the Christian religion, to establish the authority of the Holy See, and to increase the flock of the universal pastor. Thus the spirit of discovery being connected with zeal for religion, the most active principle, in that age, made rapid progress, and for a time bore down every obstacle before it. The Cape de Verd Islands, which lie off the promontory of that name, were discovered, and also the isles called Azores, above nine hundred miles from any continent *; the Portuguese must therefore, by this time, have been skilful, or at least adventurous navigators.

- A. D. 1449. The progress of these discoveries however, was, retarded for a while, by the death of prince Henry, whose superior knowledge had hitherto directed, and whose patronage had encouraged them; and yet farther by the misguided ambition of Alonzo V. who then possessed the crown of Portugal, and was almost constantly engaged in supporting his pretensions to the crown of Castile, or in carrying on expeditions against the Moors of Barbary. But no sooner did John II. succeed to the throne, than the spirit of discovery revived, and the activity of the Portuguese was directed in its proper line. Equally capable of forming and executing great designs, he declared himself the patron of every liberal enterprise. Travellers were dispatched to visit the extreme parts of Asia and Africa: a powerful fleet was fitted out, which, after discovering the kingdoms of Benin and Congo, advanced above fifteen hundred miles beyond the line: the visionary terrors of the torrid zone were dispelled; forts were built, and colonies settled on the coast of Guinea; and at length Bartholomew Diaz, the most bold and skilful navigator that had hitherto appeared among the Portuguese, after encountering incredible dangers and difficulties, descried that lofty promontory which bounds Africa to the south. To this promontory, which he durst not attempt to double, on account of the shattered condition of his ships, and the turbulence of his crew, Diaz gave the name of Cabo Tormentoso, or the Tempestuous Cape; but king John, more sensible of the importance of the discovery, and willing to encourage future navigators, styled it Cabo del Bueno Esperanza, or the Cape of Good Hope, foreseeing that it would lead to the great object of all these voyages, a passage to India by sea †.

John was confirmed in this opinion, by the informations which he received from the adventurers, whom he had sent out to make discoveries by land. The belief of the possibility of sailing from Europe to India became universal, and various conjectures were formed in regard to its consequences. The Venetians, who since the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, and the expulsion of the Genoese from Caffa, had monopolized almost the whole commerce of the East, began to be disquieted with apprehensions of losing that great source of their

* Galvino's Discoveries.

† Maffei, Hist. Indica, lib. i. c. 17. Faria y Sousa, Port. Asia, vol. I. Lastiau, Hist. de Cong. Port. vol. I.

power as well as opulence, and the Portuguese already enjoyed in idea the wealth of India. But while Europe was thus suspended between hope and fear, in regard to an event, which was one day to give a new direction to trade, and aggrandise nations hitherto obscure or inconsiderable, news arrived of a discovery no less important, and more immediately connected with the subject of this work.

CHAP. I.

C H A P. II.

The Discoveries and Settlements of the Spaniards in the New World, from the first Voyage of Columbus, to the Death of that great Navigator.

THE fame of the Portuguese discoveries allured into their service adventurous navigators from all the maritime states of Europe. Among these was Christopher Columbus, a subject of the republic of Genoa. The Genoese, till the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet the Great, whom they treacherously assisted, and who deprived them deservedly of their settlements on the Black Sea, and the trade with India through that channel, had carried on the most extensive navigation of any European power; and they still contended, though feebly, with the Venetians, their ancient rivals, for the sovereignty of the Mediterranean, and the commerce of the East by the way of Alexandria. Columbus had distinguished himself in that contest, alike by his courage and his skill as a mariner. But the Mediterranean being too narrow a sphere for the activity of his genius, which he had early cultivated by the study of geometry, cosmography, astronomy, and the art of drawing, he made a voyage to the northern seas; visited the coasts of Iceland, to which the English and other nations had begun to resort on account of its fishery; and afterwards repaired to Lisbon, in order to launch into the Atlantic, or great Western Ocean*.

CHAP. II.

A. D. 1459.

A. D. 1475.

The naval science and experience of this determined adventurer procured him a favourable reception among the Portuguese; and having gained the esteem and the hand of Philippa Perestrello, daughter of the celebrated captain of that name, employed by prince Henry in his early navigations, and who had discovered and planted under the protection of his patron the islands of Porto Santo and Madeira, Columbus fixed his residence in Lisbon. By means of this marriage, he got possession of the journals and charts of that able navigator. From them he learned the course which the Portuguese had held in making their discoveries: his favourite passion was inflamed; and in order to gratify it, he made a voyage to Madeira; to which island, as well as the Canaries, the Azores,

* Life of Columbus, written by his son Ferdinand.

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and the Portuguese settlements on the continent of Africa, he continued for several years to trade*.

During the course of these voyages, Columbus formed that great scheme of discovery which he afterwards carried so happily into execution. As the spherical figure of the earth was then known, and its magnitude ascertained with some degree of accuracy, he had early concluded, that the continent on this side of the globe must be balanced by an equal quantity of land on the other. This theory was supported by conjectures founded on experience. He had observed, after violent westerly winds, that trees torn up by the roots were driven on the coast of the Azores; pieces of wood artificially carved had also been perceived floating on the sea, to the westward of any known land; and as the winds, in the Cape de Verd islands, blow for a stated time from the west, he rightly judged that this must be owing to a great tract of land in that quarter†.

The united evidence arising from these theoretical principles and practical observations, led Columbus confidently to expect the discovery of new countries in the Western Ocean; and other reasons induced him to believe, that they must be connected with the continent of India, the grand object of the Portuguese navigators. From the exaggerated accounts of travellers, who had magnified the extent of China and Japan, he drew a rational conclusion, that in proportion as the continent of India stretched out towards the east, it must, in consequence of the spherical figure of the earth, approach nearer to the islands lately discovered in the west; that the distance from the one to the other was probably not very considerable; and that the most direct, as well as shortest course, to the rich countries of the East, was to be found by sailing due west, across the Atlantic Ocean, instead of winding along the coast of Africa‡.

Fully satisfied himself with respect to the truth of this system, and anxious to bring it to the test of experiment, Columbus, whose long absence had not extinguished the affection which he bore to his native country, laid his scheme before the senate of Genoa; offering to sail under the banners of the republic, in quest of the countries which he hoped to discover. But he had resided so many years in foreign parts, that his countrymen were unacquainted with his abilities; nor, though reputed skilful navigators, could they form any idea of the principles on which he founded his sanguine expectations of success: they therefore rejected his proposal, as the dream of a visionary projector, and lost for ever the opportunity of recovering the commerce of India, which had formerly raised their republic to such an height of grandeur||.

Columbus having thus discharged what was due to his country, made his next overture to John II. king of Portugal, in whose dominions he had been long established, and whom he considered as entitled, on that account, to the

* Life of Columbus.

† Ut Supra. Herrera, de las Ind. Occid. dec. I. lib. i.

‡ Herrera, ut sup.

|| Ibid.

second offer of his services. As his skill in his profession was well known in Portugal, the king listened to him in the most gracious manner, and referred the consideration of his plan to three eminent cosmographers, whom he had been accustomed to consult on such matters. But these men, instead of encouraging Columbus in his project, teased him with captious questions, and started innumerable objections, with a view of drawing from him a particular explanation of his system, of which they ungenerously endeavoured to take advantage; and John, swayed by their perfidious counsel, secretly dispatched a vessel, in order to attempt the proposed discovery, by following exactly the course which Columbus seemed to point out, and by that means to rob him of the honour and advantages which he expected from the success of it. But the pilot chosen to execute Columbus's plan, having neither the genius nor the fortitude of its author, after being for a time the sport of the winds, returned to Lisbon, execrating the scheme as alike wild and impracticable*.

Full of the indignation natural to a bold and generous spirit, Columbus, on discovering this dishonourable transaction, instantly quitted Portugal, and landed in Spain towards the close of the year 1484. The kingdoms of Castile and Arragon were then united, for the first time, in the persons of Ferdinand and Isabella, who neglected no opportunity of increasing their power, or extending their dominion. To these politic princes Columbus, now at liberty to court the protection of any patron, resolved to propose his scheme in person; but as he had already experienced the uncertain issue of applications to the great, he took the precaution of sending into England his brother Bartholomew, in order to negotiate at the same time with Henry VII. reputed the most opulent and sagacious prince in Europe.

Columbus's reception at the court of Spain justified this seemingly over prudent step: Ferdinand and Isabella being at that time engaged in the famous war with the Moors of Granada, which long occupied all their attention, remitted the consideration of his plan to improper judges; and that great navigator, after innumerable conferences, and wasting five years in fruitless endeavours to inform and satisfy them, was told that their majesties could not engage in any new and expensive enterprise, till the conquest of Granada should be accomplished†.

Amid the painful feelings occasioned by this new disappointment, Columbus had to sustain the additional distress of an entire uncertainty with regard to his brother's fate. In his voyage to England, Bartholomew had fallen into the hands of pirates, who had stripped him of every thing, and detained him a prisoner for several years. At length, however, he made his escape, arrived in London, and laid before the king the proposals with which he had been entrusted; and Henry, notwithstanding his excessive caution and parsimony, and the indigent condition of the agent, received Columbus's overtures with an approbation equal to their importance.

A. D. 1488.

* Life of Columbus, c. xi. Herrer. ut sup.

† Ibid.

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A. D. 1491.

Meanwhile that skilful mariner, ignorant of this matter, but considering the declaration of Spain as a final rejection of his proposal, resolved to visit the court of England in person, in hopes of there meeting with a more favourable reception. But when he was ready to embark, he received an invitation from Isabella to return to court; and the conquest of Granada, which terminated the dominion of the Moors in Spain, being soon after completed, a treaty with Columbus was signed on the 17th of April, 1492. The substance of this treaty was, that Ferdinand and Isabella constituted Columbus admiral and viceroy over all the lands and seas which he should discover, and granted to him and his heirs for ever the tenth of the clear profits which should result to their majesties from the success of his labours*.

A. D. 1492.

Preliminaries being thus adjusted, Isabella, by her attention in forwarding the preparations for the voyage, endeavoured to make some amends to Columbus for the time he had lost in fruitless solicitation. Every thing was soon in readiness. But the armament, after all, was not suitable either to the dignity of the nation by which it was equipped, or to the importance of the service for which it was destined. It consisted of no more than three vessels: the Santa Maria, a carrack or decked vessel, commanded by Columbus in person, as admiral; the Pinta, Martin Pinzon captain, and the Nigna, under the command of his brother, Vincent Yanez Pinzon, both caravels, or open vessels. With this small squadron, visualled for twelve months, and carrying only ninety men, Columbus set sail on the third of August, a little before sun-rising, from the port of Palos in the province of Andalusia†.

Aug. 13.

Columbus steered directly for the Canary Islands, where he arrived without any material occurrence, except the loss of the Pinta's rudder, which his crew regarded as a bad omen, but which he considered only as a mark of the unskilfulness or inattention of the ship-builder. While at the Canaries, he was employed in instructing his men in the true principles of navigation, and inspiring them with just notions of the enterprise in which they were engaged, as well as in refitting his ships and taking in fresh provisions. On putting again to sea, he held his course due west, leaving at once the usual tract of navigation, and launching boldly into an ocean with whose extreme shores he was unacquainted, and where he had no chart to guide him, in quest of countries which perhaps existed only in his own imagination.

Sept. 7.

Nor were these the only difficulties Columbus had to struggle with, or the only dangers he was destined to encounter. No sooner had he lost sight of land than many of his sailors, already dejected and dismayed, beat their breasts and shed tears, notwithstanding all his endeavours to animate them. They began to consider his enterprise as the desperate project of a rash adventurer, who would soon hurry them to destruction. Happily, however, Columbus possessed that

* Herrea, dec. I. lib. i. Life of Columbus, c. 15.

† Ut supra.



undaunted courage and presence of mind, which triumphs amid the greatest perils, and never fails to inspire confidence. He appeared always cool and unconcerned, comforted his crew with assurances of success, and the prospect of vast wealth in those opulent regions whither he was conducting them : he regulated every thing by his sole authority ; he superintended the execution of every order ; and allowing himself only a few hours for sleep, he was at all other times upon deck, where his uncommon skill in his profession made him be regarded as a superior being *.

As Columbus was sensible that the length of the voyage must alarm sailors accustomed only to short excursions, he endeavoured to conceal from them the progress they had made, by deceiving them in their reckoning. But other circumstances conspired to fill them with apprehensions, which all his address was scarcely able to dispel. When they were somewhat upwards of two hundred leagues to the west of the Canaries, they were struck with an appearance no less astonishing than new. They observed, that the magnetic needle in the compass no longer pointed exactly to the north, but varied a little towards the west ; and that, as they proceeded, the variation increased. This phenomenon, which is now familiar, though its cause has hitherto eluded human sagacity, shook the companions of Columbus with terror. They were in an unknown and boundless ocean, far from the usual course of navigation, and the only guide which they had left seemed about to desert them.

For that appearance, however, the ingenuity of Columbus invented a reason, which, though it did not satisfy himself, seemed plausible to his associates. But before he had advanced two hundred leagues farther, he had new terrors to allay. The sea was observed all covered with weeds ; which were, in some places, so thick as to retard the motion of the vessel. Alarmed at this strange appearance, which Columbus interpreted into a prognostic of land, the sailors imagined they were now arrived at the utmost boundary of the navigable ocean. A brisk gale sprung up, and undeceived them. They continued their course with alacrity, and began to entertain fresh hopes ; but no land appearing after crowding sail for several days, and the wind shifting to the south-west, the quarter towards which Columbus had lately directed them to steer, their fears returned, and a general mutiny ensued. The officers, who had hitherto concurred with their commander in opinion, now took part with the men. The contagion spread from ship to ship : all sense of subordination was lost. They reproached Columbus in the most virulent language ; nor did they spare the sacred persons of their Catholic majesties, whom they accused of inconsiderate rashness, in listening to the vain promises and conjectures of an indigent foreigner : they even threatened to throw him overboard, if he did not instantly alter his course, and make the best of his way to Spain, while their crazy vessels were yet in a condition to keep the sea †.

* Oviedo, *Hist. del Ind.* lib. ii. c. 5.

† Ibid.

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Oft. 12.

Sensible that his former arts could no longer avail him, and that it was impossible to rekindle any zeal for the success of the enterprise among men, in whose breasts fear had extinguished every generous sentiment, Columbus resolved to give way to the torrent, and to endeavour to sooth passions too impetuous to be controuled. He answered their abuse in the mildest and most gentle terms; and concluded with a solemn promise, that if land was not discovered within three days, he would abandon the enterprise, and direct his course towards Spain, provided they would accompany him during that time, and yield an implicit obedience to his commands*. Enraged as the sailors were, and anxious to return to their native country, this proposal did not appear unreasonable to them. They continued their course; and before one day out of the three was expired, Columbus perceived that he had not hazarded much by confining himself to so short a term. The clouds around the setting-sun gave strong presages of land; a light was observed by midnight; and as soon as morning dawned, they beheld an island, about fifteen leagues in circumference, well watered, and stored with wood.

The effects of such a sight, on an exhausted and dispirited crew, may easier be imagined than expressed. They instantly began the *Te Deum*, as an hymn of thanksgiving to God; and passing, in the transports of their joy, from one extreme to another, they now pronounced their commander, whom they had so lately reviled and threatened, to be a man inspired by Heaven with sagacity and fortitude more than human. They threw themselves at his feet with feelings of self-condemnation; imploring him to pardon their ignorance, incredulity, and insolence, which had created him so much disquiet, and obstructed the prosecution of an enterprise surpassing the ideas of former ages, and the intrepidity of other nations. Columbus behaved with the same firmness, gravity, and equanimity, in prosperity as in adversity. He ordered the boats to be manned and armed, and rowed towards the island, with colours displayed, martial music, and every other kind of warlike pomp: and he was the first European who set foot in that New World which he had discovered. In order to inspire awe, he landed in a rich dress, with a naked sword in his hand: his men followed, and kneeling down, all kissed the ground, which they had so long desired to see. He next took solemn possession of the country, in the name of their Catholic majesties; or as others say, only in that of Isabella, the whole expence of the enterprise being defrayed by the crown of Castile, and an exclusive right to all the benefits arising from the success reserved for her subjects of that kingdom†.

A singular scene now ensued. The natives gazed in silent admiration upon their new guests, whom they considered as a superior order of beings. The dress of the Spaniards, their beards, their arms, but above all their ships, appeared wonderful to those simple people, yet in the rude state of nature.

* Oviedo, *Hist. del Ind.* lib. ii. c. 5.† *Life of Columbus*, c. 23. Herrera, dec. I. lib. i. Robertson, *Hist. America*, book iii.

Nor were the Spaniards less surpris'd at what was offer'd to their view: The inhabitants of both sexes appear'd entirely naked. The men had no beards, nor either sex hair on any part of what is properly call'd the body; a circumstance common to all the natives of the American islands and continent, except the Esquimaux. Their complexion was of a dusky copper colour, likewise peculiar to the New World; their features were rather singular than disagreeable: though not tall, they were well shaped; and their faces, and other parts of the body, were fantastically painted. They were wholly ignorant of the use of iron, and the nature of sharp weapons, innocently rubbing their hands against the edges of the Spanish swords.

This island, which is one of that large cluster call'd the Lucaya, or Bahama isles, Columbus denominat'd San Salvador, though it is now better known by the name of Guanahani, given it by the natives. He employ'd the second day in examining the country; and perceiv'd, from the universal poverty of the inhabitants, that it was not the rich territory to which his hopes had point'd. Having observ'd, however, that most of the people wore small plates of gold, by way of ornament, in their ears and nostrils, he eagerly inquir'd where they got that precious metal. They point'd towards the south; and thither Columbus immediately direct'd his course, taking along with him seven of the natives, that by acquiring the Spanish language, they might serve as guides and interpreters.

Soon after putting to sea, Columbus saw several islands, and touch'd at three of the largest, on which he bestow'd the names of Santa Maria de la Concepcion, Ferdinandanda, and Isabella; taking, at the same time, solemn possession of them, according to the forms observ'd by the Portuguese in all their early discoveries. But as these islands nearly resembel'd that of San Salvador in soil, produce, and inhabitants, he made no stay in any of them. He wanted gold, for which he every where inquir'd; and being uniformly answer'd, that it was brought from the south, he follow'd that course, and discover'd the large island of Cuba, though without acquiring any knowledge of its extent. Here the Spaniards saw cotton spring up spontaneously, and a variety of uncommon trees and plants, with which they were wholly unacquainted; but not finding gold in sufficient quantities to satisfy their avarice or his own expectations, Columbus order'd them to steer towards the east, where the natives intimat'd that an island call'd Hayti was situat'd, in which that metal was found in greater abundance than among them*. The inhabitants of Cuba were equally respectf'ul with those of the islands already discover'd, and like them naked.

After having been long retard'd by contrary winds, Columbus arriv'd at the island of Hayti, to which he gave the name of Española, but which is now commonly call'd Hispaniola. This appear'd to be the largest and most fertile tract of land he had yet met with, and inspir'd him with the most sanguine hopes. The inhabitants fled with the utmost velocity at the approach of the Spaniards, whom

Oa. 27.

Dec. 6.

* Life of Columbus, c. 30.

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A. D. 1492.

they seemed to regard with equal horror and surprise. A woman, however, was fortunately taken, and brought to Columbus; who, after treating her with great kindness, dismissed her with a present of such toys as he had found most valued in those countries. The favourable account she gave of the strangers, brought on an intercourse with the natives, who nearly resembled the people of Guahani and Cuba. Like them, they were naked and gentle, ignorant, simple, credulous, and timid. On first touching the cloaths of the Spaniards, they trembled and started back; then laid their hands upon their heads, in token of respect, and cast their eyes up towards heaven, whence they supposed their visitors to be immediately descended.

But what pleased the Spaniards more than all this homage, was the ornaments of gold, which the natives of Hayti possessed in greater abundance than their neighbours, and which they readily exchanged for pins, glass beads, and other shining and glittering trinkets. Soon after his arrival here, Columbus was visited by one of the caziques or princes of the country, who expressed great curiosity to see the Spanish ships. He was carried in a sort of palanquin upon the shoulders of four men, attended by upwards of two hundred of his subjects, and distinguished by every mark of respect and veneration. His deportment was grave and stately: he was reserved towards his own people, but familiar with the Spaniards; and on coming on board the admiral's ship, he ordered all his train to keep at a distance, except two of his counsellors, who sat at his feet. He ate and drank with the admiral, made him a present of some thin plates of gold, and a girdle curiously set with seed-pearl; in return for which he received some cloaths, slippers, and beads, with which he was highly delighted*.

Still Columbus, intent on discovering the mines that yielded gold, continued to inquire anxiously after their situation. The natives concurred in pointing out a mountainous country, which they called Cibao, at some distance from the sea, and farther east. Deluded by this sound, which appeared to him the same with Cipango, the name by which Marco Polo and other travellers distinguished the islands of Japan, Columbus no longer doubted of the vicinity of the countries he had discovered to the remote parts of Asia; and in full expectation of reaching soon those regions which had been the object of his voyage, he bent his course towards the east. After sailing in that direction for some time, he put into a commodious harbour, which he named St. Thomas. Here he received messengers from Guacanagari, one of the five caziques or sovereigns among whom the island was divided, and by much the most powerful. This prince, in whose district the harbour lay, sent Columbus a present of a mask curiously fashioned, the ears, nose, and mouth of which were of beaten gold, and invited him to the place of his residence, near what is now called Cape François.

Before Columbus ventured upon the proffered interview, he dispatched some of his officers to visit Guacanagari; and they returned with such favourable accounts both of the country and the people, as made the admiral impatient to perform his

* Life of Columbus, c. 32. Herrera, dec. I. lib. i. c. 15.

visit. As he was coasting eastward for this purpose, his ship, through the negligence of the pilot, ran upon a rock; and but for the timely assistance of boats from the *Nigna*, all on board must have perished. Columbus was also indebted for relief to the cazique and his people, who crowded on this occasion to the shore; and instead of taking advantage of the distress of the Spaniards, lamented their misfortune with tears of the most sincere condolence, and putting to sea in a number of canoes, assisted in saving whatever could be got out of the wreck. Guacanagari in person visited the admiral, now on board the *Nigna*, and endeavoured to console him for his loss, by offering all that he possessed to repair it*; an instance of generosity truly great, and which proves, that the most amiable of human virtues, those which make us feel for the distresses of others, and incline us to relieve them, are neither implanted by education, nor confined to the meridian of cultivated manners.

Columbus's condition made consolation necessary. He had yet heard nothing of the *Pinta*, with which Martin Pinzon, impatient of separate honour, had quitted his companions on leaving Cuba, regardless of the admiral's signals to slacken sail till they should come up with him; and he no longer doubted but his treacherous associate had set sail for Spain, in order to pre-occupy the ear of his sovereign, and rob him of the glory and reward of his discoveries. There now remained but one vessel, and that the smallest and most crazy of the squadron, to traverse such a vast tract of ocean, and to carry so many men back to Europe. These were alarming circumstances; and to a person of less fortitude than Columbus, must have been altogether overwhelming. But that great man, amid his most pressing misfortunes, was never without a resource. He resolved to leave part of his crew in the island, that they might learn the language of the natives, examine the nature of the country, search for mines, and prepare the way for the commodious settlement of a colony.

The Spanish sailors approved of this design, as soon as it was made known to them, many offering voluntarily to be among the number of those who should remain. Nothing therefore was wanting towards its execution, but the consent of Guacanagari; and on the admiral's promising to protect him from the Caribbeans, a fierce and warlike people, who, as he informed Columbus, inhabited several islands to the south-east, and whom his subjects durst not face in battle, that credulous prince closed eagerly with the proposal. The ground was accordingly marked out for a small fort, which Columbus called *Navidad*, or *Nativity*, because he had landed there on Christmas day. A deep ditch was drawn round it: the ramparts were fortified with palisades; the great guns, saved out of the admiral's ship, were planted upon them; and in ten days the work was finished, the simple natives labouring with inconsiderate assiduity in erecting this first monument of their own slavery†.

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. i. c. 18.

† Robertson, Hist. Amer. book ii.

BOOK I.

A. D. 1492.

Meanwhile Columbus, by his careſſes and liberality, laboured to increaſe the high opinion which the iſlanders entertained of the Spaniards. But at the ſame time that he endeavoured to inſpire them with confidence, he wiſhed likewiſe to give them ſome ſtriking idea of his power to puniſh, or take vengeance on ſuch as were the objects of his juſt indignation. He therefore drew up his men in order of battle, in preſence of a vaſt multitude, and made an oſtentatious, but innocent diſplay of the ſharpneſs and force of the Spaniſh weapons. Strangers to the uſe of iron, and little acquainted with hoſtile inſtruments of any kind, theſe rude people wondered and trembled. Their fear was not allowed to abate before the great guns were fired; the ſudden exploſion of which ſtruck them with ſuch a degree of terror, that they fell flat to the ground, covering their faces with their hands; and when they beheld the aſtoniſhing effect of the bullets, they concluded that it was impoſſible to reſiſt men, who had the command of ſuch deſtructive inſtruments, and who came armed with thunder and lightning againſt their enemies*.

Jan. 4.
1493.

Having taken theſe, and other precautions, for the ſecurity of the infant colony, which conſiſted of thirty-eight of his people, under the command of a gentleman of Cordova, Columbus left Navidad, and ſteered towards the eaſt, giving names to moſt of the harbours on the northern coaſt of the iſland. Two days after his departure he deſcried the Pinta, and on the third came up with her. Pinzon endeavoured to juſtify his conduct; pretending that he was driven from his courſe by ſtrefs of weather, and prevented from returning by contrary winds. The admiral admitted his apology, though by no means convinced of his innocence; and as the condition of his ſhips, as well as the temper of his men, made it neceſſary to haſten his return to Europe, Columbus directed his courſe towards the north-eaſt, and ſoon loſt ſight of land. After a dangerous voyage, during which he had frequently given up all hopes of ſafety, he arrived in the port of Palos, ſeven months and eleven days from the time when he ſet out on his enterpriſe†.

Jan. 16.

March 15.

Columbus was received on landing with royal honours: the bells were rung, the cannon fired; and all the people, in ſolemn proceſſion, accompanied him and his crew to the church, where they returned thanks to heaven, which had ſo wonderfully conducted them through numberleſs dangers and difficulties, and brought their voyage to a proſperous iſſue. After this act of devotion, the admiral's next care was, to inform Ferdinand and Iſabella of his arrival and ſucceſs. No leſs aſtoniſhed than delighted with this intelligence, their majeſties requeſted him to repair immediately to court, that from his own mouth they might receive a full account of his extraordinary voyage and diſcoveries.

During his journey to Barcelona, where the court then reſided, Columbus was continually ſurrounded by crowds of admiring ſpectators from the adjacent country; and his entrance into that city was a perfect triumph. The natives of the countries which he had diſcovered walked firſt; next to them were carried the ornaments of gold, ſhaped by their rude art, the grains of gold found in the moun-

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. i. c. 20. Life of Columbus, c. 34.

† Ut ſup.

tains, and the dust of the same metal gathered in the rivers; and after these appeared the various commodities, and curious productions of the new discovered countries. Columbus himself closed the procession, and attracted the eyes of all ranks of people, who seemed to perceive at a distance, in the strange objects presented to their view, that inexhaustible source of riches which would one day flow into Spain. Ferdinand and Isabella received him clad in their royal robes, and seated upon a throne. When he approached, they stood up; raised him, when he kneeled to kiss their hands; commanded him to take his seat, on a chair prepared for him, and to sit covered (a distinction peculiar to a Spanish grandee) while he gave them an account of his voyage. Every mark of honour, in a word, that gratitude or admiration could suggest, was conferred upon him. But what pleased Columbus more than all these was, an order to equip, without delay, an armament of such force as might enable him not only to take possession of the countries which he had already discovered, but to go in search of those more opulent regions towards which his enterprising genius still confidently pointed*.

During the interval employed in making preparations for this second expedition, the fame of Columbus's first voyage spread over Europe, and excited the attention of all orders of men. The ignorant were struck with wonder and amazement at the idea of a new world, while the learned were filled with admiration and joy at an event which extended so much the boundaries of human knowledge. Various conjectures were formed concerning the new found countries, and what division of the earth they belonged to. Columbus adhered tenaciously to his original opinion, that they should be reckoned part of those vast regions of Asia comprehended under the general name of India; and in consequence of this notion, the name of Indies was given to them by Ferdinand and Isabella, in a ratification of their former agreement with him†. Even after the error which gave rise to this opinion was detected, and the true situation of the New World ascertained, the name has remained; the appellation of West Indies being still given to the American islands in those latitudes, and that of Indians to all the barbarous tribes, both in the islands and on the continent.

This inviting name, the specimens of the riches and fertility of the new countries, and the exaggerated accounts of the adventurers, awakened a wonderful spirit of enterprise among the Spaniards. Persons of all conditions offered themselves as volunteers, to accompany Columbus in his second expedition. Even the cautious Ferdinand seemed to catch the same spirit with his subjects; and a fleet of seventeen ships, some of which were of considerable burden, was fitted out with a rapidity unusual in that age. It had on board fifteen hundred persons of different ranks and employments, furnished with every thing requisite for conquest or settlement; with seeds, plants, domestic animals, and instruments of all sorts‡.

* Life of Columbus, c. 42, 43. Herrera, dec. I. lib. ii.

† Life of Columbus, c. 44.

‡ Herrera, dec. I. lib. ii.

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A. D. 1493.

Formidable, however, and well provided as this fleet was, Ferdinand and Isabella did not rest their title to the West Indies solely upon the success of its operations. The papal grant was judged necessary : and Alexander VI. a pontiff infamous for every crime that disgraces humanity, as vicar and representative of Jesus Christ, and supposed, in virtue of that character, to have a right of dominion over all the kingdoms of the earth, bestowed on their Catholic majesties, by a liberality which cost him nothing, and served to establish the jurisdiction and pretensions of the court of Rome, all the countries which they had discovered, or should discover, an hundred leagues to the westward of the Azores* ; this line of partition being necessary, in order to prevent the present grant from interfering with that formerly made to the crown of Portugal. As zeal for propagating the Christian faith was the pretext employed by Ferdinand for soliciting this grant, a body of friars, under father Boyl, a Catalonian monk of great reputation, were appointed to accompany Columbus, in order to instruct the natives of the New World. But the ambassadors of Christ, in carrying to those inoffensive and formerly happy people, the doctrines of the gospel, literally verified the words of their master : " I bring not peace, but a sword !"

Nov. 25.

These previous steps being taken, in order to secure to the crown of Spain so great a portion of the globe, Columbus set sail with his fleet from the bay of Cadiz, and arrived, after a voyage of seven weeks, at Hispaniola. In his passage he discovered the Caribbee or Leeward islands, and visited successively Dominica, Marigalante, Guadaloupe, Antigua, and Porto Rico. But the joy which he felt, on account of these discoveries, was small in comparison of his sorrow, when he landed at Navidad. He found the fort entirely demolished, and not a Spaniard alive to welcome his return. They were all cut off to a man. This disaster had been occasioned by the insolence and rapacity of the Spaniards themselves, as the admiral learned from a brother of the cazique Guacanagari. The powerful restraints, imposed by the presence of Columbus, were no sooner withdrawn, than the garrison threw off all obedience to the commanding officer. The gold, the women, the provisions of the natives, were all the prey of those licentious invaders. The gentle spirit of the people was at length roused. The straggling parties of the Spaniards were surprised, while exercising their oppressions in security ; and the cazique of Cibao, whose territories they chiefly infested, on account of the gold found in that district, assembled his people, and surrounding the fort, set it on fire. The Spaniards were all either killed in defending it, or perished in attempting to escape ; and Guacanagari, whose attachment all their outrages had not been able to alter, in endeavouring to protect them, had received a wound, by which he was still confined †.

In consequence of this account of the matter, and the necessity of securing the friendship of some potentate of the country, in order to facilitate the projected settlement, Columbus, though by no means satisfied of the fidelity of Guacana-

* Torquemada, Mon. Ind. lib. xviii. c. 3.

† P. Martyr. Herrera, dec. I. lib. ii. Life of Columbus, c. 51.

gari, resolved not to inquire too scrupulously into his conduct. He rejected all violent counsel; and instead of wasting his time in punishing past wrongs, took precautions against any future injury. With this view he traced out the plan of a town, which was reared and fortified with the utmost expedition, and to which he gave the name of Isabella, in honour of his patroness the queen of Castile.

While this city, the first founded by Europeans in the New World, was building, Columbus had to struggle with a variety of obstacles. The natural inactivity of the Spaniards was increased by the enervating influence of the climate: the disappointment of the chimerical hopes of the more sanguine adventurers, who saw themselves obliged to toil like day-labourers, instead of reaping those golden harvests of indolence, which they expected, threw them into a dejection of mind bordering on despair, and which led to general discontent: the spirit of disaffection spread; and a conspiracy was formed, which, if not discovered in time, might have proved fatal to the governor and the colony. Happily, however, Columbus was able to secure the ringleaders, whom he sent prisoners to Spain, whither he dispatched twelve of the smaller vessels, which had served as transports, with an earnest request for a supply of men and provisions*. Meanwhile he planned several expeditions into the interior part of the country, in order to prevent his people from brooding over their disappointment, as well as to awaken new hopes. The district of Cibao in particular was visited, and fully answered the description given of it by the natives. Gold was found in dust or grains in every river and brook: and the Spaniards, from these indications, no longer doubted but the country contained rich treasures in its bowels, which would prove a recompence for all their sufferings.

Concord and order being thus restored to the colony, Columbus resolved to pursue his discoveries. He accordingly left the government of the island to his brother Don Diego, with the assistance of a council of officers, and weighed anchor with one ship and two small barques under his command; but after a tedious and dangerous voyage of full five months, he was obliged to return without making any discovery of importance, except the island of Jamaica. This disappointment, however, was in some measure compensated when he arrived at Hispaniola, by meeting there with his brother Bartholomew, to whom he was united in close friendship by a similarity of talents, and whom he had not seen for thirteen years. Bartholomew, hearing of his brother's discoveries, in his way to Spain from the coast of England, had made himself known to Ferdinand and Isabella, who persuaded him to take the command of three ships, appointed to carry provisions to the colony in Hispaniola†.

Never could Columbus have found a friend when he stood in need of more one capable of assisting him with his counsels. The soldiers under Don Pedro Margarita, an officer appointed to visit the different parts of the island during the admiral's absence, and to impress the inhabitants with

April 24,
A. D. 1494.

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. ii.—Father Boyl, the apostolic vicar, was one of the most violent of the conspirators.

† Life of Columbus, c. 51.

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A. D. 1494.

March 24.

A. D. 1495.

an idea of the Spanish power, had thrown off all restraint, and pillaged and insulted the inoffensive natives, who waited only for a signal from their leaders to fall upon the colony. It was therefore now necessary to have recourse to arms, which Columbus had hitherto carefully avoided employing against the Indians; and conscious that success depended on the vigour and rapidity of his operations, he instantly assembled his forces. They were now reduced to a very small number; the body which took the field consisting only of two hundred foot, twenty horse, and twenty large dogs, a very formidable troop, when employed against naked savages. All the caciques of the island, Guacanagari excepted, were in arms against the Spaniards, with forces amounting to an hundred thousand men. Instead of taking advantage of the woods and mountains, they advanced into the most open plain in the country; where Columbus attacked them during the night, when undisciplined troops are least capable of acting to advantage, and obtained an easy victory. Filled with consternation by the noise and havoc made by the fire-arms, the impetuous force of the cavalry, and the fierce assault of the dogs, they threw down their arms, and fled at the first onset; and so thoroughly were they intimidated, that they relinquished from that moment all thoughts of resistance, and abandoned themselves to despair*.

After this victory, Columbus employed several months in marching through the island; and as the inhabitants every where submitted, without resistance, to the Spanish government, he imposed a tribute on them, as a mark of their subjection. Every person above fourteen years of age, who lived in those districts where gold was found, was obliged to pay quarterly a certain quantity of gold dust; and such as lived in other parts of the country, so many pounds of cotton. This tax, so contrary to the maxims which Columbus had hitherto pursued in regard to the Indians, as well as to the mildness and moderation of his temper, he was forced not only to impose, but to exact with rigour, in order to counteract the machinations of his enemies at the court of Spain, by evincing what he had reported of the richness of the country, and to encourage Ferdinand and Isabella to persevere in prosecuting his plans. The event proved that he was not actuated by false pretences or groundless suspicions, and forms his best apology. Aquado, a groom of the bed-chamber, was sent over by their Catholic majesties, to inspect into the conduct of Columbus, while thus employed in violating his own feelings and the rights of humanity to serve them. This circumstance, joined to the insolence and self-importance of the commissioner, determined the admiral to return to Spain, in order to vindicate his measures. He accordingly set sail; leaving the administration of affairs, during his absence, to his brother Bartholomew, with the title of adelantado, or lieutenant-governor†.

Soon after his arrival in Spain, Columbus appeared at court with all the confidence of conscious integrity, supported by the sense of eminent services; and

* Several of them were so simple, and so much astonished at the sight of the cavalry, as to believe the man and horse to be but one animal, or rather a kind of divinity. *Life of Columbus*, c. 52.
† Herrera, dec. I. lib. iii.

Ferdinand and Isabella, ashamed of lending too favourable an ear to frivolous or ill-founded accusations, received him with such distinguished marks of respect, as covered his enemies with confusion. The gold, the pearls, the cotton, and other commodities which he produced, seemed fully to refute every charge against him in regard to the poverty of the country. Of the natives, with whom he was now more fully acquainted, he communicated the following among other particulars: That all the caziques, or sovereigns, lived in palaces at some distance from the towns, where were painted a number of extraordinary images, which they called Cemís, and sometimes honoured with the names of their ancestors: that these images were worshipped by the people as titular deities; and that offerings were made to some of them for health, to others for affluence, fine weather, prosperous enterprises, and many such wishes; but that they were considered as inferior to the sun, which was reputed the chief, or cazique of the divinities: that each of the sovereigns was also high priest in his own district, a circumstance which added greatly to the authority of those princes, and enabled them to practise many religious impostures on the understandings of their ignorant and credulous subjects: that several of the caziques kept three stones, to which they ascribed extraordinary virtues; one promoting the fertility of the soil, another assisting women in child-birth, the third procuring either rain or sun-shine, as the occasion required: that, when a cazique died he was embowelled, and dried by the fire, in order to preserve his body from corruption, which was interred in a cave, with his military weapons, and store of provisions: that the wife, who bore him the greatest affection, was likewise buried with him; and that there could not be a more dishonourable proof of female ingratitude, than any mark of reluctance to pay this last duty to her lord and husband: that they strangled all the sick of whose recovery they despaired, a practice common to this day among certain Negroes on the coast of Africa: that after death they imagined they should go to a valley of vast extent, of which the caziques supposed they should be sovereigns, and where all believed they should find their parents, kindred, and friends, and be blessed with an eternal round of uninterrupted felicity: that they had no law for regulating the number of wives, but that one generally possessed an authority over the rest: that both sexes were remarkably indolent, averse to, and even incapable of much labour; wonderfully sparing in their diet, one European eating as much as three of them; and that the men were peculiarly moderate, and even cool, in regard to the pleasures of love; which frigid indifference, and want of appetite, made the neglected women passionately fond of the more amorous Spaniards*.

With these particulars relative to the natives of Hispaniola, Columbus mingled an account of his own success in reducing them to obedience, dwelling particularly on such circumstances as he knew were most likely to please; the tax which he had imposed, the mines he had found out, and the future discoveries which he hoped to make. Flattered by such an accession of territory, such an increase of

* Id. ibid.

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A. D. 1496.

subjects, and the prospect of such a copious source of wealth, Ferdinand and Isabella resolved to supply the colony in Hispaniola with every thing that could render it a permanent establishment; and also to furnish Columbus with such a fleet, as might enable him to proceed in search of those yet undiscovered countries, of whose existence he seemed so confident *.

The means most proper for accomplishing both these ends were concerted with the admiral; but though he obtained with great facility and dispatch the royal approbation of every measure and regulation he proposed, his endeavours to carry them into execution were so long retarded, as must have tired out the patience of any man less accustomed to encounter difficulties and to surmount them. The Spaniards were so backward in engaging voluntarily to settle in a country, whose noxious climate had proved fatal to so many of their countrymen, that Columbus proposed to transport to Hispaniola such malefactors as had been convicted of crimes, which, though capital, were of a less atrocious nature. The prisons were accordingly drained in order to collect members for the new colony; and the judges were instructed to recruit it by their future sentences †.

This measure, rashly proposed, and inconsiderately adopted, has been imitated by the other European nations in their settlements. But, as the abbé Raynal well observes ‡, though men who have violated the laws of their country, may sometimes be useful in established colonies, it is not with such materials that the foundations of a society destined to be permanent should be laid. A year, however, elapsed before Columbus could obtain two ships to carry over even these wretched supplies intended for the colony; and almost two years were spent before the small squadron was equipped, of which he himself was to take the command §. It consisted of six ships only, of no great burden, and these but indifferently provided for a long or dangerous voyage.

With this squadron Columbus at length set sail, and meditated a course different from any he had hitherto taken. As he was fully persuaded that the fertile regions of India lay to the south-west of those countries which he had discovered, he proposed to steer in that direction; but the importunities of his crew, who were alarmed at the heat of the torrid zone, obliging him to alter his course to the north-west, he fell in with a considerable island, to which he gave the name of Trinidad, and which lies on the coast of Guiana, near the mouth of the Orinoco. From the vast body of water which this river rolls towards the ocean, he justly concluded that it could not have its source in an island, but must flow through a country of immense extent; and consequently, that he was now arrived at that continent which it had so long been the object of his wishes to discover. Under the influence of this idea, he steered to the west, along the coast of those provinces now known by the names of Paria and Cumana. He landed in several places, and had some intercourse with the natives, who resembled those of Hispaniola in their appearance and manner of life, but seemed to possess a

August 30.
A. D. 1498.

August 1.

* Ut supra.

† Taron. *Hist. Gen. de l'Amérique*, tom. I. Herrera, dec. I. lib. iii.

‡ *Hist. Philos. et Politique*.

§ Herrera, dec. I. lib. iii.

better understanding, and greater courage. The country produced four-footed animals of several kinds, as well as a variety of fowls and fruits; and Columbus was so much delighted with its beauty and fertility, that he imagined it to be the paradise described in Scripture, which the Almighty chose for the residence of man, while yet in a state of innocence*. The shattered condition of his ships, however, prevented him from prosecuting his discoveries: he therefore bent his course towards Hispaniola; and in his way thither, he fell in with the islands of Cubagua and Margarita, which afterwards became remarkable for their pearl fishery.

When Columbus arrived at Hispaniola, he was wasted to an extreme degree by fatigue and sickness. He stood much in need of repose; but the situation in which he found the affairs of the colony unhappily afforded him no prospect of enjoying it. Many revolutions had happened in that country during his absence. His brother Bartholomew, in consequence of an advice which the admiral gave him before his departure, had removed the greater part of the colony from Isabella, to a more commodious station on the opposite side of the island, and laid the foundation of St. Domingo, long the most considerable European town in the New World. But while the adelantado was employed in establishing this new settlement, and in keeping the Indians under subjection, a mutiny broke out among the Spaniards. Francis Roldan, whom Columbus had appointed alcade, or chief justice of the island, a station which required him to be the guardian of order and tranquillity, was the author of this revolt. He accused the admiral and his two brothers of arrogance and severity; and as the people of every nation view with a jealous eye the exaltation of foreigners, a considerable number of the Spaniards, seduced by Roldan's arguments, made choice of of him as their leader, and taking arms against the adelantado and his brother, seized the king's magazine of provisions, and attempted to surprize the fort of St. Domingo. It was preserved, however, by the vigilance and courage of Don Diego Columbus, and the mutineers were obliged to retire to the province of Zaragua; where they still continued to disclaim the adelantado's authority, and even endeavoured to persuade the Indians to follow their example†.

This distracted state, in which Columbus found the colony when he landed at St. Domingo, was increased by other circumstances. Three ships, which he had dispatched from the Canaries, with a supply of men and provisions, had been carried, by the violence of the currents, to the east of St. Domingo, and forced to take shelter in a harbour in the province of Zaragua. There Roldan and his seditious followers being cantoned, he artfully persuaded the commanders, before they were apprised of his insurrection, to set on shore a considerable part of the new settlers. These men, the refuse of the jails of Spain, to whom deeds of violence were familiar, were easily induced to join the insurgents. By such an accession of force Roldan became extremely formidable, and very extravagant in his demands. Columbus, however, chose rather to comply with

* Id. *ibid.*† Ut *supra*.

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them, than to kindle the flames of civil war; and by that prudent measure, he dissolved without bloodshed a dangerous combination, which threatened the colony with ruin *.

Lands were allotted the mutineers, in consequence of this agreement; and the Indians settled in each district, were appointed to cultivate a certain portion of ground for the use of these new masters, in place of the tribute formerly imposed. But how necessary soever such a regulation might be in a sickly feeble colony, it unhappily introduced among the Spaniards the Repartimientos, or distributions of Indians established by them in all their settlements, which brought numberless calamities on the natives of the New World, and subjected them to the most grievous oppressions. Nor was this the only bad effect of the insurrection in Hispaniola: it prevented Columbus from prosecuting his discoveries on the continent; and though he transmitted to Spain an accurate account of the whole transaction, together with a description of the new countries which he had discovered, and specimens of the gold, pearls, and other curious and valuable productions which he had acquired by trafficking with the natives, the recriminating apology of Roldan and his followers, conveyed by the same ships, unfortunately gained more credit in the court of Ferdinand and Isabella †. But previous to the effects (so humiliating to Columbus, and so disgraceful to the Spanish nation) produced by these representations, events had happened which merit attention, equally on account of their own importance and their connexion with the history of America.

While Columbus was engaged in conducting the Spaniards to the West, the spirit of discovery did not languish in Portugal, where it had first acquired vigour. Emmanuel, who had lately succeeded to the throne of that kingdom, and who possessed the enterprising genius of his predecessors, persisted in their grand scheme of opening a passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope. A squadron was accordingly equipped for the purpose; and Vasco de Gama, a man of noble birth and great talents, who was vested with the command of it, doubled that formidable promontory which had so long been the boundary of navigation, and directing his course towards the north-east, arrived at Calicut on the coast of Malabar. He was struck with the wealth and populousness of the country, which exceeded his most romantic ideas; but as he possessed neither sufficient force to attempt a settlement, nor commodities to enable him to carry on commerce of any consequence, he hastened back to Portugal with an account of his success, and landed safely at Lisbon, after a voyage of two years, two months, and five days ‡.

Before the news of this great discovery reached Europe, the merchants of Seville, animated by the general spirit of enterprise, had sent out four ships in quest of new countries, by permission of the Spanish court, under the command of Alonzo de Ojeda, a gallant and active officer, who had accompanied Co-

* Life of Columbus, c. 80.
Orib. lib. i.

† Herrera, dec. I. lib. iii.
‡ Ramusio, vol. I.

Benzon. Hist. Nov.

lumbus in his second voyage. He was assisted by Americus Vesputius, a Florentine gentleman, eminently skilled in all the sciences subservient to navigation. Ojeda, however, struck out no new path of sailing; but following fervilely the route which Columbus had taken in his last voyage, the journal and charts of which he had seen, arrived on the coast of the new continent, two hundred leagues to the eastward of Paria. He traded with the natives, who readily exchanged gold and pearls for glittering toys; and standing to the west, proceeded as far as Cape de Vela, touching at several places, and examining the face of the country, every particular relative to which was carefully observed by Americus Vesputius, who had chiefly directed the operations during the voyage*. Americus possessed other talents than those of a navigator; and by publishing, soon after his return to Spain, an interesting account of the countries which he had visited, he was able to give his own name to the western world, in prejudice to the prior right of Columbus. Mankind are now become sensible of the imposture: but time has sanctified the error; and this new quarter of the globe continues to be distinguished universally, though unjustly, by the appellation of AMERICA.

But though Ojeda's voyage was productive of no important discoveries, the gold and pearls for which he trafficked along the coasts of Cumana and Maracapana, encouraged other adventurers to visit the New World. The first of these was Alonso Nigro, who had accompanied Columbus when he discovered the continent, and who made a successful voyage to the coast of Paria. Soon after, Yanez Pinzon, one of Columbus's companions in his first voyage, sailed from Palos with four ships. He stood boldly towards the south, and was the first Spaniard who ventured to cross the equinoxial line †; but, notwithstanding the pretensions of his countrymen, he appears to have landed on no part of America beyond the mouth of the Maragnon, or river of the Amazons.

Jan. 13.

A. D. 1500.

During this last year of the fifteenth century, so fertile in great events, that rich district of South America, on the confines of which Pinzon had stooped short, was more fully discovered by the Portuguese. Encouraged by the successful voyage of Gama to the East Indies, Emmanuel had fitted out a powerful fleet, furnished with every thing necessary for commerce or war. The command of it was given to Pedro Alvarez Cabral; who, in order to avoid the inconveniences of steering along the coast of Africa, stood out to sea, and kept so far west, that, to his surprise, he found himself on the shore of an unknown country in the fifteenth degree beyond the line. He at first supposed it to be some island in the Atlantic Ocean hitherto unobserved; but after sailing along its coast for several days, he was gradually led to believe, that a territory so extensive could only belong to an immense continent. In this conjecture, no less probable than just, he was confirmed by the appearance of the natives, who had not the least resemblance to the Africans, or any other people he had ever seen; and having formed a very high idea of the fertility of the country, to which he gave the name of

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. iv.

† Id. ibid.

BOOK I.

A. D. 1500.

The Land of the Holy Cross, (since changed into that of Brasil, because the precious wood there found, used in dying, and which was for a time its most valuable commodity, bore this name) he took possession of it for the crown of Portugal, and dispatched a ship to Lisbon with an account of his unexpected discovery *. Hence it appears, as Herrera well observes, if the sagacity of Columbus had not conducted mankind to America, Cabral, by a fortunate accident, might have led them, a few years later, to the knowledge of that vast continent: chance might have accomplished, to use the elegant language of Dr. Robertson, that great design, which it is now the pride of human reason to have formed and perfected.

While the Spaniards and Portuguese were performing these successive voyages, which made them more fully acquainted with the extent and opulence of the New World, the great discoverer himself, instead of enjoying those honours and that tranquillity he had reason to expect, was experiencing at Hispaniola every distress in which the envy and malevolence of the people under his command could involve him, and every mortification which the ingratitude of the court he had served could inflict. Though the pacification with Roldan broke the union and weakened the force of the mutineers, it did not eradicate the seeds of discord out of the island. Several of the malcontents continued in arms: and Columbus and his brothers were obliged to take the field alternately, in order to check their incursions, or to punish their licentious temerity.

The disquiet occasioned by these disorders prevented the admiral from attending to the machinations of his enemies at the court of Spain, where the most atrocious charges were presented against him by such of the malcontents as had returned to Europe, and memorials of their pretended grievances from the rest. He was accused of tyranny, cruelty, and avarice; of using the Spaniards as slaves, driving the Indians to despair, and secreting great part of the gold, pearls, and other precious commodities which had come into his hands: and these avowed endeavours of his enemies to ruin him, were seconded by the disguised but more dangerous insinuations of that party among the courtiers, who had always thwarted his schemes, and envied his success. Ferdinand, naturally suspicious and œconomical, listened with a partial ear to every accusation; for, notwithstanding the accounts which the admiral had given of the riches of the New World, the remittances from it had hitherto been so small, as not to defray the expence of the armaments fitted out. The king therefore concluded, that Columbus must either have deceived or defrauded Spain. Even Isabella, who had uniformly protected him, was at length shaken by the number and boldness of his accusers. She began to suspect, that a disaffection so general must have been occasioned by real grievances, which called for redress. A resolution fatal to Columbus was taken: Francis Bovadilla, a knight of Calatrava, was appointed to repair to Hispaniola, with full powers to inquire into the conduct of the admiral; and, if he found the charge of mal-administration proved, to supersede him, and assume the government of the island †.

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. iv.

† Life of Columbus, c. 85. Robertson, Hist. America, book ii.

It was impossible, as Dr. Robertson very justly remarks, to escape condemnation, when this preposterous commission made it the interest of the judge to find the person whom he was sent to try, guilty. Though Columbus had composed all dissensions in the island, and had made such effectual provision for working the mines and cultivating the country, as would have secured a considerable revenue to the king, as well as large profits to individuals, Bovadilla discovered, from the moment he landed in Hispaniola, a determined resolution of treating the author of these important regulations as a criminal. He made himself master of the king's stores and the fort at St. Domingo by violence: he took possession of the admiral's house, from which he happened to be absent; seized his effects, as if he had already been convicted; and summoned him to appear before his tribunal, in order to answer for his conduct, transmitting to him at the same time a copy of the royal mandate. Columbus did not hesitate a moment what course he should take. Though deeply affected with the ingratitude of Ferdinand and Isabella, he repaired directly, in obedience to the will of his sovereigns, to the court of that violent and partial judge whom they had appointed to try him. Bovadilla, without admitting the admiral into his presence, ordered him instantly to be arrested, to be loaded with chains, and hurried on board a ship. Meanwhile he ingratiated himself with the Spaniards, by the most liberal concessions in their favour: he set at liberty the prisoners confined by Columbus; and in order to collect materials for a charge against him, gave ear to the most improbable and inconsistent accusations. No informer, how infamous soever, was rejected. The result of this inquest was transmitted to Spain, whither Columbus and his two brothers were carried in fetters, and confined in different ships*.

Happily however, even under this reverse of fortune, that firmness of mind, which distinguishes the character of the great discoverer, did not forsake him. He endured the insult offered to his character, though aggravated by cruelty, not only with composure but with dignity. Never was the elevation of his soul more conspicuous, than in his answer to Alonso de Vallejo, the captain of the vessel on board which he was confined. Touched with the sentiments of veneration and pity due to the rank, the age, and the merit of his prisoner, Vallejo, as soon as he was clear of the island, approached the admiral with profound respect, and offered to release him from the fetters with which he was unjustly loaded. "No Vallejo!" replied Columbus, with a generous indignation, "I wear these chains in consequence of an order from my sovereigns. They shall find me as obedient to this as to all their other injunctions. By their command I have been confined, and their command alone shall set me at liberty†."

The voyage to Spain was fortunately short: and Ferdinand and Isabella were no sooner informed of the indignity put upon the man, to whose services they owed so many obligations, and who stood so high in the opinion of Europe, than ashamed of their own conduct, and eager to efface the stain which it might fix on their reign and character, they instantly issued orders to set Columbus at

* Ovied, lib. iii.

† Life of Columbus, c. 86. Herrera, dec. I. lib. iv.

liberty;

BOOK I.

A. D. 1500.

liberty; invited him to court, and remitted money, in order to enable him to appear there in a manner suitable to his rank. When the admiral entered the royal presence, he threw himself at the feet of his sovereigns, where he remained for some time, without being able to utter a word; so violent were the agitations of his mind! But at length, being ordered to rise, he recovered himself, and vindicated his conduct in a pathetic speech; producing the most satisfactory proofs of his own integrity, as well as of the malevolence of his enemies. Ferdinand and Isabella expressed their sorrow for what had happened, disavowed their knowledge of it, and were liberal in promises of protection and future favour; but, though they instantly degraded Bovadilla, in order to prevent any suspicion of their having authorized his violent proceedings, they did not restore Columbus to those honours and employments of which he had been unjustly deprived. Afraid to trust the man they had injured, and to whom they were so highly indebted, they retained him at court under various pretences, and appointed to the government of Hispaniola, Nicholas de Obando, a knight of the military order of Alcantara*.

A. D. 1501.

The daily reports of the immense wealth of America, excited the avarice and the ambition of new adventurers. Rodorigo de Bastidas, a man well skilled in geography, of bold spirit, and considerable fortitude, fitted out two ships in co-partnership with John de la Cosa, who had served under Columbus, and was reputed the best mariner in Spain. They steered directly for the coast of Paria, where they arrived after a prosperous voyage, and discovered all the coast of the province now known by the name of Terra Firma, from Cape de Vela to the Gulph of Darien; after which they returned by Hispaniola, with a considerable cargo of gold and pearls. The same motives, nearly about the same time, induced Ojeda and his former associate, Americus Vesputius, to undertake a second voyage. Unacquainted with the destination of Bastidas, they held the same course, coasted along the same shores, and touched at the same places; but they were less fortunate, the voyage being neither productive of riches nor discoveries. It furnished the artful Americus, however, with the means of gaining more credit to his pretensions to the discovery of the new continent, by confounding the particulars of his two voyages†.

Before the return of these adventurers, a fleet was equipped, at the public expence, for carrying over Obando, the new governor, to Hispaniola, where his presence was much wanted. Bovadilla, conscious of the iniquity of his proceedings against Columbus, continued to make it his sole object to gain the favour of his countrymen, by accommodating himself to their passions and prejudices. Instead of habituating them to the restraints of law, he suffered them to enjoy such uncontrouled licence, as encouraged the wildest excesses. He gave a legal sanction to the oppression of the Indians; taking the exact number of those unhappy people, dividing them into classes, and distributing them among his adherents, by whom they were driven in crowds to the mountains, and com-

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. iv. Life of Columbus, c. 87.

† Herrera, dec. I. lib. iv.

pelled to work in the mines, where tasks beyond their strength were imposed upon them without mercy or discretion. But on the arrival of Obando, who had the command of the most respectable armament hitherto fitted out for the New World, a proclamation was issued declaring the natives to be free subjects of Spain, of whom no service was to be exacted contrary to their own inclination, nor any labour required without paying them an adequate price for it. Bovadilla was commanded to return instantly to Spain, to answer for his conduct; Roldan, and the other ringleaders of the mutineers, were ordered to leave the island at the same time; various regulations were made for suppressing that licentious spirit which had been so hurtful to the colony; and an ordinance was published, directing all the gold, acquired by working the mines, to be brought to a public smelting-house, and declaring one half of it to be the property of the crown*.

While Obando was taking these necessary steps for securing the tranquillity of the colony of Hispaniola, and rendering it beneficial to the Spanish government, Columbus, who had planted it, and who had an unquestionable right to the office of viceroy over all the countries which he had discovered, was employed in soliciting, and in vain, the favour of an ungrateful court. The jealous and politic Ferdinand, afraid of trusting a subject, and an injured one, with a jurisdiction which might render him formidable, eluded all the requests of the admiral for the performance of his original treaty. He inspired Isabella with the same suspicions; and Columbus finding every claim of justice and merit disregarded by an unfeeling prince, attempted to work upon his avarice, in order to obtain, advanced as he was in years, and broken by misfortunes, the command of a fleet for the purposes of discovery.

A new road to India, the first object that called forth his inventive genius, still occupied the admiral's thoughts. A passage to the East had indeed been found by the Cape of Good Hope; and the return of the Portuguese fleet under Cabral, about this time, awakened the avidity of all Europe, by the richness of its cargo: but Columbus offered to conduct the Spaniards to India by a route which he expected would prove both shorter and less dangerous. He had conceived an opinion, that, beyond the continent of America, there was a sea which extended to the East Indies; and he hoped to find some strait or narrow neck of land, (situated, as he fortunately conjectured, near the gulph of Darien) by which a communication might be opened between Europe and the extreme parts of Asia. Ferdinand and Isabella, roused by the prospect of sharing the wealth of India, and glad of the pretext of an honourable employment for removing from court a man with whose demands they deemed it impolitic to comply, and whose services it was indecent to neglect, eagerly embraced this proposal; and Columbus, anxious to perfect his grand scheme of discovery, set out on a fourth voyage with all the ardour of a youthful adventurer†.

Important, however, as the object of this voyage appeared to their Catholic Majesties, Columbus was able to obtain only four small barques to perform it

* Id. *ibid.*

† Life of Columbus, c. 83. Oviedo, lib. iii.

BOOK I.

A. D. 1502.

in, the largest of which did not exceed seventy tons in burden. With these he arrived at Hispaniola, accompanied by his brother Bartholomew, and his second son Ferdinand, the historian of his actions. His motive in touching there, was the hope of exchanging one of his vessels, which he had found unfit for service, for some ship of the fleet that had carried over Obando. But the new governor would neither permit him to enter the harbour, in order to negociate the exchange of his ship, nor to take shelter during a violent hurricane, of which he discerned the approach. Nay, so great was Obando's contempt of the admiral's sagacity, that he would not put off for a few days the departure of the fleet destined for Spain. The hurricane came : Columbus was prepared for it, and by his skill in seamanship, was able to ride it out ; but of the homeward-bound fleet, consisting of eighteen vessels, only two or three escaped. On board one of these were all the effects that had been saved from the wreck of the admiral's fortune ; and, what is very remarkable, in the general wreck perished Bovadilla, Roldan, and the greater part of those who had been most active in persecuting Columbus, and in oppressing the Indians, with all the wealth which they had acquired by their injustice and cruelty *.

This diversity of fortune, and discrimination of characters, is universally attributed, by the historians of those times, to an immediate interposition of divine Providence. By the vulgar, it was viewed in a different light. Believing, in the fondness of their admiration, Columbus to be possessed of supernatural powers, they imagined he had conjured up this dreadful storm, in order to be avenged of his enemies †. But the misfortunes which he afterwards experienced, during his voyage, were sufficient to convince the most credulous of them, that he had no command over the winds and waves.

July 14.

Leaving Hispaniola, where he had met with such an inhospitable reception, Columbus stood towards the continent. In his passage, which was tedious and dangerous, he discovered the island of Guanica, in the entrance of the bay of Honduras. Here he was visited by a considerable number of the inhabitants of the continent. They came in a canoe of vast length, eight feet wide, and constructed with much ingenuity, and appeared to be a people more civilized than any he had hitherto discovered. They wore several massy ornaments of gold ; and on the Spaniards inquiring, with their usual eagerness, where they got that precious metal, they pointed to certain countries situated to the west, where it was found in such plenty, according to their accounts, as to be applied to the most common uses. But Columbus was so bent on finding out that imaginary strait, which he supposed to communicate with the Indian ocean, that he slighted this important information ; and instead of steering along the coast of Yucatan, which would have conducted him to the rich empire of Mexico, he bore away to the east towards the gulph of Darien.

In this navigation, during the course of which he landed several times, and procured considerable quantities of gold, in exchange for European toys, Co-

* *Id. ibid.*† *Ut supra.*

Columbus discovered all the coast of the American continent, from Cape Gracias a Dios, to a harbour which, on account of its beauty and conveniency, he named Porto Bello. But he sought in vain for the strait, through which he hoped to open a passage to India; nor was he so fortunate as to discover the great southern ocean, though he advanced a considerable way across that narrow isthmus which separates it from the gulph of Darien. He was so much delighted, however, with the fertility of the country, and conceived so favourable an idea of its wealth, from the samples of gold produced by the natives, that he resolved to plant a colony on the river Belem, in the province of Veragua. But this scheme was rendered abortive by the ungovernable spirit of the Spaniards, whose insolence and rapacity roused the natives to arms. Part of the settlers were cut off; and the rest being obliged to abandon their station, were taken on board by the admiral*.

A. D. 1503.

From this repulse, the first which the Spaniards met with in the New World, we may date the commencement of those calamities which pursued Columbus, without intermission, to his grave. His feeble squadron was assailed by a furious hurricane, in which one of his ships perished: he was obliged to abandon another, as unfit for service; and with the remaining two, he with difficulty reached Jamaica, where he was under the necessity of running them aground, to prevent them from sinking. The measure of his misfortunes seemed now to be full. He was cast ashore on an island at a considerable distance from Hispaniola, the only settlement of the Spaniards in America: and though an account of his deplorable situation was conveyed to the governor, (by two of Columbus's attendants in two canoes, his ships being ruined beyond the possibility of repair,) the unfeeling jealousy of Obando suffered him and his companions to languish above a year, exposed to misery in all its various forms. Disasters similar to those which he had encountered during his voyage overtook him in his passage to Spain: his vessel, shattered by violent storms, sailed seven hundred leagues under jury masts; and when he arrived at the port of St. Lucar, he was informed of an event more fatal to his hopes than all his other misfortunes, the death of his patroness queen Isabella, in whose justice, humanity, and favour he still confided.

Sensible that he had little to expect from the cruel heart of Ferdinand, but conscious that his services deserved reward, and his wrongs redress, Columbus spent the remainder of his days in soliciting in vain an ungrateful prince, whose vigorous but contracted mind had never entertained a proper idea of his merit. He died at Valladolid on the 20th of May, 1506, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, with that composure and firmness which distinguished every action of his life†.

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. v. Life of Columbus, c. 89, &c. Oviedo, lib. iii. of Columbus, c. 108. Herrera, dec. I. lib. vi.

† Life

C H A P. III.

The Spanish Colonies and Discoveries, from the Death of Columbus, to the Expedition of Cortez.

BOOK I.

A. D. 1503.

BEFORE the death of Columbus, several events happened in Hispaniola deserving of notice, and intimately connected with the progress of the Spanish colony in that island. In consequence of the proclamation, by which the Indians were declared free subjects of Spain, and exempted from all but voluntary services, the Spaniards could not procure a sufficient number of hands either to work the mines or to cultivate the soil. No allurements or rewards could induce a people to labour, who considered exemption from toil as supreme felicity. Many of the first settlers quitted the island, when deprived of the means of enriching themselves; and above a thousand of those, who came over with the new governor, died of distempers peculiar to the climate. In such circumstances, the demand of one half of the product of the mines, as the share of the crown, was found to be an exaction so exorbitant, that no adventurers would engage to work them. Obando therefore ventured to relax the rigour of the royal edict, in order to save the colony from ruin. He made new distributions of the Indians among the Spaniards, but enjoined their masters to pay them a certain sum, as the price of their labour, in order to screen himself from the imputation of having again subjected them to slavery; and he reduced the royal share of the gold found in the mines from the half to the third part, and afterwards to a fifth, at which it long remained*.

A. D. 1503.

Both these regulations were approved of at court. But though Ferdinand's avarice was prevailed upon to moderate the claim of the crown, notwithstanding his eagerness to improve the royal revenue, the natives of Hispaniola could not be persuaded to submit anew to that yoke of bondage which they had found so galling. They made several attempts to defend their liberty. These were considered by the Spaniards as acts of rebellion, not as the efforts of men struggling for their native rights. The Indians, the original owners of the country, were regarded as slaves, who had revolted against their masters, and methods the most atrocious, and which cannot be related without horror, were employed to subject them again to servitude. The Spaniards, as Las Casas informs us, (who was himself an eye-witness of what he relates) mounted on fine horses, armed with swords and lances, felt no emotion but contempt at the sight of an enemy so ill equipped. They went on butchering with impunity. They would rip open women with child, for the sake of slaughtering at the same stroke the parent and the offspring: they would lay wagers, who should shew himself most dexterous in cleaving a man down at a single blow, or in making his head fly off his shoulders; they would snatch infants from the breast of their mothers, and dash out their brains against the stones: they trained their

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. v.

dogs to hunt and devour the unhappy fugitives; and some of them are said to have made a vow to massacre twelve Indians every day, in honour of the twelve apostles*.

CHAP. III.

The caziques or Indian sovereigns, when taken, were condemned to perish by the most cruel and ignominious deaths: the most treacherous arts were employed for securing them; and all their subjects, without any regard to the distinction of ranks, were reduced to the same state of abject slavery. The small gratuity paid to them as the price of their labour was withdrawn, while the tasks imposed upon them were rendered more severe, and their condition in all respects more wretched than even under Bovadilla. Obando distributed them among his friends, in the island: Ferdinand conferred grants of a similar nature upon his courtiers, as the least expensive mode of rewarding their services; and the Indians being farmed out, by the persons whose property they were become, to others engaged in working the mines, or who possessed estates in Hispaniola, their oppressions no longer knew any bounds; they were indiscriminately chained together like beasts of burden. Those who sunk under their labour were compelled to rise by severe blows. Their constitutions thus exhausted by excessive toil, were farther impaired by unwholesome and scanty diet. Despair seized upon their hearts. They took every method to rid themselves of a miserable existence; and the whole race, computed to have amounted to one million, when first visited by Columbus, became extinct in a few years†.

A. D. 1506.

Barbarous,

* *Relacion de Destruyc. de las Indias, par Bart. de las Casas.* Raynal, *Hist. Philos. &c.*

† *Id. ibid. Herrera, dec. i. lib. vi. Oviedo, lib. iii.* Different reasons have been assigned by historians for the merciless conduct of the Spaniards towards the Indians; but the most intelligent writers have ascribed it to fanaticism, or an intolerant and persecuting spirit of religion, which inspires hatred and vengeance, and authorises every violence against those whom bigots imagine to be the objects of divine wrath, because they differ from them in their theological creed, or mode of worship. The fact indeed speaks for itself: a persuasion, that they were the favourites of a partial, and the instruments of an offended God, only could have made a whole nation deliberately perpetrate crimes so shocking to humanity.

The pope, as vicergerent of Christ upon earth, had given to the Spaniards a grant of all the new discovered countries: the inhabitants of those countries were idolaters, and very averse to the Christian doctrines; it was therefore thought lawful to slay them, or reduce them to servitude, as should seem most eligible. The injunctions given by Moses to the Jews, while in search of the promised land, were applied to the present occasion by some Spanish priests. "When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make the answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it. And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword. But of the cities of this people which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth." Deut. chap. xx.—It is therefore probable, that if the Spaniards had not found the labour of the Indians necessary to their avarice, they would at once have extirpated the whole race.

To a person acquainted with these particulars, Dr. Robertson's account of the Spanish cruelties in Hispaniola, notwithstanding the elegance of the style, must appear very unsatisfactory. Could a tenderness for the interests of Christianity in general, restrain the presbyterian priest from ascribing to their true cause the frightful effects of Romish superstition? Or did a fellow-feeling for his brethren of the altar, induce the royal historiographer to write the vindication of the Spanish clergy?—*Hist. of America, book iii. &c.*

BOOK I.

A. D. 1506.

Barbarous, however, as the policy of Obando was, with respect to the Indians, the colony of Hispaniola flourished under his government. He established many wise regulations among the Spaniards, and immense quantities of gold were procured at the expence of the sweat and the blood of the natives. When the wealth of the mines began to fail, he turned the attention of his countrymen to a more useful branch of industry than that of digging for treasure in the bowels of the earth, the cultivation of the soil; and some slips of the sugar-cane being brought from the Canaries, by way of experiment, they were found to thrive so well in Hispaniola, that the cultivation of them soon became an object of commerce, and the manufacture of sugar the principal occupation of the inhabitants of the island, and the most considerable source of their wealth*.

A. D. 1507.

These endeavours of Obando to promote the welfare of the Spanish settlement at St. Domingo, were powerfully seconded by Ferdinand. The large remittances which he received from the New World, having at length opened his eyes to the importance of those discoveries which he had formerly affected to despise, he erected a board of trade, composed of persons of rank and abilities, to whom he committed the administration of American affairs. But notwithstanding the attention of this board, and the prudence of the governor, the colony in Hispaniola was threatened with ruin. The original inhabitants, on whom the Spaniards chiefly depended for their prosperity, wasted so fast, that the settlers found it impossible to extend their improvements, or even to carry on the works which they had already begun.

A. D. 1508.

In order to remedy this evil, Obando decoyed forty thousand of the inhabitants of the Lucayos into Hispaniola; under pretence of carrying them to a delicious country, the residence of their departed ancestors, and where they should enjoy uninterrupted felicity, but in reality to mingle their groans and tears with those of the wretched natives of that island†. Other Indians were made captives, and brought by force from the neighbouring isles. But all these recruits proving insufficient, and mouldering away, like the original inhabitants, by reason of the disproportion of the tasks imposed on them to the feebleness of their frame, the slave-trade, that disgrace to humanity, was established with the Portuguese settlements on the coast of Africa; and as it was found by experience, that one Negro could execute as much hard work as four Indians, this traffic was soon extended, and still continues to be carried on, from political motives, in defiance of religion and philosophy, all severe labour in

That contempt which civilized nations are so apt to entertain for barbarians, and the exultation of conscious superiority in strength or skill, are too ready, it must be owned, to persuade men that a power of dominion, or a capacity for government, entitles them to the right of governing. These errors have their origin in human nature, and have given birth to many violences; but that violence which is deaf to the voice of supplication, and dead to the feelings of sympathy, which delights in cruelty, and enjoys the groans of the miserable, and which is invariably the same, whether it acts under a Jewish apprehension of an heavenly promise to a chosen race, a popish persuasion of the divine authority and universal jurisdiction of a supreme pontiff, a puritanical ambition of erecting a kingdom of grace, or a Mahometan zeal for propagating the doctrines of a supposed prophet, and extending the empire of his followers, can alone be inspired by fanaticism.

* Oviedo, lib. iv.

† Herrera, dec. I. lib. vii.

the European settlements in the New World being performed by Negroes:—Thus the discovery of America, how benevolent soever might be the intention of Columbus, or whatever advantages Europe may derive from that event, was not only the source of inexpressible misery to the natives, but has involved a great part of the inhabitants of another quarter of the globe in the most abject slavery. If to these evils we add that venereal malady, that poison which withers the roses of love! that bane of human bliss! which the Americans communicated to their conquerors, and which commerce has since carried to every shore, we shall perhaps find reason to lament, as lovers of our species, that sapient foresight which led the Genoese navigator to launch into the western main in quest of another continent.

The Spaniards made no discoveries during the government of Obando, nor did they establish any new settlement, except one in the island of Porto Rico, which Columbus had discovered in his second voyage. This island was subjected by Juan Ponce de Leon, an officer eminent for courage and conduct, who commanded under Obando in the eastern district of Hispaniola. The natives were all reduced to servitude, and rapidly exterminated by cruelties similar to those already related*.

Obando was succeeded in the government of Hispaniola, by Don Diego Columbus, son of the great navigator. Ever since the death of his father, he had been employed in soliciting Ferdinand for those offices and immunities which descended to him by inheritance, in consequence of the original agreement with the admiral. Wearied at length with fruitless importunities, he carried his claim before the board vested with the management of Indian affairs; and to the eternal honour of that court, a decision was given against the king. New obstacles, however, might have been thrown in the way of Don Diego, if he had not formed an alliance, by marriage, with the family of the duke of Alva, a grandee of the first rank, whose solicitations Ferdinand could not resist. Soon after his arrival in Hispaniola, the new governor established a colony in the little island of Cubagua; where large fortunes were rapidly acquired by the fishery of pearls, and where the Indians experienced new miseries in being obliged to dive for them†. He next projected the conquest of Cuba: but, before we enter into the particulars of that event, it will be proper to carry forward the progress of discovery.

About the time that young Columbus entered on his government, Alonzo de Ojeda, who had already made two voyages as a discoverer, and Diego de Nicuesa, who had acquired a large fortune in Hispaniola, sailed from that island for the continent of America, in order to plant two colonies there, in consequence of articles with the Spanish court. To Ojeda was assigned all the territory ex-

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* Relacion de B. de las Casas. In this island it was that the famous dog Bezerillo, whose services the Spanish historians are so fond of extolling, distinguished himself by his fierceness, and his singularity in discerning the peaceful or hostile disposition of an Indian; in reward for which he had the same allowance given him as a soldier, and that not only of provisions, but also of gold and slaves. Herrera, dec. I. lib. vii.

† Herrera, dec. I. lib. vii.

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tending from Cape de Vela to the gulph of Darien, and to Nicuesa all the country from the middle of that inlet to Cape Gracias a Dios. These two gentlemen differed before their departure about the limits of their governments, and the extent of their several jurisdictions; but experience soon convinced both, that their dispute was equally frivolous and premature, each having a grant of more territory than he was able to take possession of, and more privileges than were of any use to him.

When Ojeda arrived at Carthagena, he found the natives in arms in order to oppose his landing. This hostile disposition was occasioned by the violences of certain Spanish captains, who had touched upon these coasts. Every method was practised in vain to soothe the resentment of the Indians, and to convince them that nothing was intended by Ojeda but mutual advantage: they continued obstinate; and he, at last, endeavoured to effect by force what he could not accomplish by persuasion. The Indians were defeated with considerable loss: but this advantage, and the booty acquired, had almost proved fatal to the Spaniards. They marched up to a little town, about four leagues from the sea; and finding that the inhabitants had retreated to the mountains, they dispersed themselves carelessly into small parties, in quest of gold and plunder. In that straggling situation they were attacked by the enemy, who killed and wounded seventy of them with vast flights of poisoned arrows, and the rest with difficulty made their way to the ships*.

The courage of the Spaniards, however, revived on the arrival of Nicuesa; and he and Ojeda, forgetting their private animosities, united in taking vengeance upon the Indians, whom they defeated, and slaughtered with a barbarity too horrid for description, without distinction of age or sex. Having thus satiated their revenge, and acquired a considerable booty in gold, the two governors returned to their ships, and soon after separated. Ojeda, with three vessels, steered for Uraba and the gulph of Darien, and Nicuesa for Veragua, with six. Both were very fortunate.

Ojeda not being able to find the gulph of Darien, which he had been told abounded in the precious metal, on his arrival in Uraba, built a fort, to which he gave the name of St. Sebastian, upon a rising ground, in order to protect his people against the attacks of the natives, who were warlike, and little disposed to admit foreigners among them. He at the same time dispatched a vessel for Hispaniola with the prisoners and gold he had taken, in order to procure in exchange men, arms, and provisions. All these precautions were found necessary, and even insufficient for the prosperity of the colony. The Indians of this district were the most alert at their weapons of any the Spaniards had yet encountered. They shot their poisoned arrows with incredible force, used their wooden swords with great address, and threw their darts with such violence, as well as judgment, as rendered them very formidable enemies. Besides their superior skill in war, the natives of Uraba had made greater progress in the arts of civil life, than any American nation the Spaniards had hitherto visited. Their houses were neat, and commodiously divided into different apartments: their

* Gomara, Hist. c. 57, &c. Herrera, dec. I. lib. vii.

beds consisted of cotton hammocks, slung to the roof; and though they went naked, on account of the warmth of the climate, they were no strangers to weaving and spinning, as appeared by several ingenious specimens of cotton cloth.

Ojeda and his followers, at first, made some fortunate incursions into the country adjoining to St. Sebastian; but the Indians daily increasing in numbers and in courage, the Spaniards were at length cooped up within the walls of the fort, where they had almost perished by famine. Happily, however, in this extremity, they received a reinforcement of seventy men from Hispaniola. But these being found insufficient, the governor set out in person, in order to procure more effectual assistance, promising to return in fifty days. Alas! he knew not what disasters he was doomed to struggle with. After being driven on the island of Cuba, where he experienced inexpressible hardships of every kind, he arrived by unexpected means at Hispaniola, and there died, when ready to sail with every necessary for the relief of his settlement *.

Such were the distresses of Ojeda and his little colony, nor were those of Nicuesa inferior. When these two commanders parted company, Nicuesa in a caravel, attended by a brigantine under the conduct of Lopes de Olano, held his course along the shore in quest of Veragua, ordering the larger ships, for their greater security, to keep out to sea. This opportunity of gratifying his ambition, and of gaining the supreme command, the treacherous Olano seized. Instead of keeping close in company with the caravel, he lost sight of her entirely; then standing out to sea, and joining the rest of the fleet, he gave them to understand, that Nicuesa had perished by ship-wreck; and that the chief direction of the expedition devolved upon him, as lieutenant. No suspicion being entertained of the truth of this intelligence, the officers and sailors willingly yielded obedience, and by Olano's order steered for the river Belem, where he proposed to settle a colony. But that spot, which had formerly proved unpropitious to the generous efforts of Columbus, in a similar attempt, was perfectly ruinous to Olano and his companions; who there experienced every species of human misery, from the noxiousness of the climate, the scarcity of provisions, and the disasters attending an unknown and dangerous navigation.

Nor was the situation of Nicuesa, in the meantime, less deplorable. He had sailed up the river Veragua with the caravel, and was there ship-wrecked, not a morsel of provisions being saved; and as this accident happened in the night, many of the crew were thrown ashore barefooted and naked, in which condition they travelled over marshes, mountains, rocks, and through forests, feeding upon vegetables, with whose qualities they were unacquainted. In the course of their wanderings, they were beset by Indians; and, to complete their misfortunes, they were at last shut up by the floods in a desert island, which afforded nothing but a few roots and shell-fish. There they spent three months in all the horrors inseparable from such a situation, every attempt to cross on floats to the opposite shore proving ineffectual. Several of them were reduced to

* Id. *ibid.*

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such a state of debility, that they crawled about upon their hands and feet, in quest of those unwholesome vegetables with which they were obliged to satisfy the cravings of hunger, and under which many of them died. But happily those who survived their hardships, met with an unexpected deliverance. Four sailors, who had run away with the boat when the caravel was lost, and to whose treachery they ascribed all their calamities, by accident met with Olanó and his unfortunate associates, whom they made acquainted with their story. Whether adversity had softened the lieutenant's heart, or fear of the rebellion of his followers, now informed that their commander was still alive, inclined him to act an humane part, certain it is, that Nicuesa and the wretched remains of his crew owed their preservation to the assistance of Olanó. He sent a brigantine to bring them off, and carry such provisions as the country afforded for their refreshment.

When Nicuesa joined the sickly colony at Belem, he demonstrated that adversity had not broken his spirit, by ordering Olanó to be immediately loaded with irons. He afterwards released him at the intercession of those who had been the dupes of his treachery; and perceiving that no hope remained of rendering the settlement useful in the spot which the lieutenant had chosen, he re-embarked his people, with a design of returning to Hispaniola: but want of provisions obliged him to put ashore a few leagues above Porto Bello, where he resolved to settle a colony, saying, "Let us stay here *en nombre de Dios*, in the name of God." Accordingly he began to erect a fort, which took the name of Nombre de Dios. But in this second attempt to establish a settlement he failed, as in the former; his people being reduced, in a short time, by fatigue, famine, and the unwholesomeness of the climate, to so small a body as one hundred men, not the seventh part of the number with which he originally set sail.

In order, however, clearly to understand the fate of the colony at Nombre de Dios, it will be necessary to return to the settlement which Ojeda left at St. Sebastian in Uraba. When the fifty days, which the governor had fixed for his return, were expired, all hopes of relief vanished, and the miserable Spaniards gave themselves up to despair. Two small vessels only remained, and these were insufficient to transport their whole number, with the provisions requisite for their support, to any other country. It was therefore resolved in a general council, after mature deliberation, not to separate, though they were reduced to the most deplorable condition that imagination can figure, but patiently to wait the will of Heaven; or at least to stay till their number should be so much diminished by sickness, want, and the arrows of the Indians, that the few survivors could safely embark. This period was not far remote. The Spaniards died so fast, that soon only hands enough remained to work the two vessels. These set sail, after laying in all the stock of provisions which they could collect, consisting chiefly of the carcases of four mares, and some palmetoes.

Francis Pizarro, afterwards so celebrated, whom the governor had appointed his substitute, commanded the largest vessel, and had the good fortune to join the Bachelor Enciso, just arrived in the bay of Carthagena with
a ship

a ship and a brigantine, an hundred and fifty men, good store of live stock, and other provisions, destined for the relief of Ojeda's colony at St. Sebastian, in consequence of a contract with that gentleman a little before his death. The smaller vessel, commanded by an officer named Valenzuela, perished at sea. Pizarro used his utmost endeavours to prevail on Enciso to steer for Veragua, and join Nicuesa; but the Bachelor was obstinate in executing his engagements literally. As he entered the bay, however, his ship foundered, and himself and the crew were saved with difficulty by the brigantines, all the provisions on board being lost. He insisted nevertheless upon landing; but he was so roughly handled by the natives, and the country was so little inviting, that he allowed himself to be persuaded by Vasco Nugnez de Balboa, another celebrated Spanish captain of those times, to steer for the gulph of Darien.

In consequence of the advice of Balboa, who had formerly visited the coast of Darien along with Bastidas, a descent was made near the bottom of the gulph, where he affirmed a pleasant town, abounding with provisions, was situated. Every thing corresponded with his description, and conspired to raise the spirits of the half famished Spaniards, except the opposition of the natives; a large body of whom, under the command of a cazique, disputed the possession of this land of promise. A battle, however, was fought, in which the Indians were routed, and the town was the reward of the conquerors; who, besides a considerable quantity of provisions, and several pieces of manufactured cotton, got a booty of fine gold plates, to the value of ten thousand pesos.

Balboa gained so much credit by the success of this enterprize, which he had chiefly conducted, that his ambition was roused, and he aspired at the government of the colony, which it was agreed should be established on the gulph of Darien, under the name of Santa Maria el Antigua. In order to effect his purpose, he enlarged his friendships, and concerted a scheme for deposing Enciso, under pretence, that, as they were not within the limits of Ojeda's government, they owed no obedience to his representative. Several circumstances, too trivial to be enumerated, conspired to facilitate this design: Enciso was deposed, and the principal direction of affairs entrusted to Balboa.

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The colony at Santa Maria might now have flourished, had not fresh subjects of dispute arisen, and such a variety of separate interests and opinions, as threatened it with anarchy and ruin. At length it was agreed, that Nicuesa should be sent for to govern the settlement; and a vessel was accordingly dispatched to transport him, and all his people, to Darien. The persons deputed for this purpose found him naked, emaciated, exhausted, and feeble, feeding like a savage upon roots and herbs. The shocking spectacle drew tears from the beholders: but Nicuesa was so much elated with his change of fortune, that he soon forfeited the good opinion of the colony at Santa Maria, and was deposed before he had well assumed the reins of government. He was afterwards sent to sea in a rotten caravel with seventeen men, and perished with the vessel and crew *.

* Ut supra.

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Having thus got rid of Nicuesa by a resolution of the colony, and secured himself in the administration by his address, Balboa was enabled to take revenge upon the Bachelor Enciso for his industry in fomenting the late dissensions. He charged him with arrogating to himself an illegal authority, and committing treason, by exerting a power in virtue of Ojeda's commission, which could only be bestowed by the king. Under this pretext he secured the Bachelor's person, and confiscated his effects; though he afterwards released him, on condition that he should take the first passage that offered for Europe: and in order to secure himself yet farther in the government, to guard against the accusations of Enciso, and solicit aids and supplies for the infant settlement, Balboa dispatched two of his firmest friends to Spain and Hispaniola, sending the Bachelor under their custody, and a process against him, couched in the most artful and acrimonious terms.

The new colony in Darien began now to thrive exceedingly, and spread the terror of the Spanish arms among the Indian nations. With some of these Balboa contracted alliances; to which the accidental discovery of two Spaniards, who had deserted from Nicuesa on his first arrival in Veragua, greatly contributed. They had lived among the natives, had acquired their language, and gave the first intimations of the extraordinary wealth of this part of America, especially towards the south. These imperfect notices were confirmed by the testimony of an Indian prince, who offered to conduct the governor to a country where the precious metal was found in as great abundance as iron, by the accounts of the Spaniards, was in Europe. Balboa had also contracted an intimacy with a neighbouring cazique named Careta, whom he had first taken prisoner, and afterwards released on the assurance of his friendship, and a promise that he would supply the colony with provisions. Careta was then at war with another cazique, whose name was Ponca; and this prince learning that the Spaniards took part with his enemy, fled to the mountains, leaving his country to be wasted, and his treasures to be pillaged by the allies.

By these means the Spanish influence became daily more considerable. Several princes solicited the friendship of Balboa; and, among others, the cazique Cemagre, lord of the adjacent country, who advanced with his seven sons, to invite the governor to his city. The Spaniards were struck with the magnificence of Cemagre's palace, where they were hospitably entertained, and which far exceeded any thing they had beheld in America. It was an hundred and fifty paces in length, and eighty in breadth, raised upon wooden pillars, and inclosed by a stone wall, with rails at the top, so beautifully carved that the Europeans were astonished at the workmanship. But what was more peculiarly pleasing to Balboa's attendants, was the great abundance of provisions, which they found in the storehouse, together with a variety of red and white pleasant liquors drawn from Indian wheat, roots, and the palm. The wealth and generosity of this prince farther increased their satisfaction. His eldest son, desirous of obliging the Spaniards by every method in his power, ordered several pieces of gold, equally valuable for their workmanship and purity, and weighing about four thousand pesos, to be presented to Balboa and his

his followers; and it was on the division of these presents that they quarrelled, when the young prince, perceiving them on the point of proceeding to acts of violence against one another, tumbled the gold out of the balance and cried, "Why do you contest about such a trifle? If the Spaniards are so passionately fond of gold, as to forsake their native country, and disturb the peace of distant nations in search of it, I will conduct them to a kingdom, where they may enjoy it in profusion, and where the meanest utensils are made of this metal so highly prized." In answer to their eager inquiries, occasioned by such agreeable intelligence, he farther informed them, that, at the distance of six suns, that is of six days journey, towards the south, they should discover another ocean, near to which this wealthy kingdom was situated; but, if they intended to make war upon it, that a powerful force would be necessary*.

The young prince's information was confirmed by the testimony of the more grave and experienced Indians; and Balboa having now before him objects suited to his boundless ambition, and the enterprising ardour of his genius, was impatient to set out on an expedition, which promised both to himself and his country such an accession of wealth and power. But previous negotiations and preparations were requisite to insure success. He therefore dispatched one of his officers to solicit Ferdinand for the necessary reinforcement, and to lay before the Spanish ministry the inexhaustible source of riches, which he hoped to discover; sending at the same time, in order to enforce his request, the king's fifth of the gold found by the new colony†.

While this affair was negotiating, and Balboa employed in securing the friendship of the neighbouring caziques, Don Diego Columbus, governor of Hispaniola, was taking measures for the conquest of Cuba. He gave the command of the troops destined for this service to Diego Velasquez, one of his father's companions in his second voyage, and who was well qualified for conducting such an enterprise. The island abounded with inhabitants; but they were of the same unwarlike character as the natives of Hispaniola, and seemed to have formed no concert for their common safety. The only obstruction which the Spaniards met with was from Hatuey, a cazique who had fled from Hispaniola, and taken possession of the eastern extremity of Cuba. Rendered desperate by adversity, he stood upon the defensive at their first landing; and afterwards encamped, with a considerable body of Indians, in the woody grounds, which were inaccessible to the Spanish cavalry. There he maintained his station for some time, but was at length dislodged by the superior skill and courage of the Spaniards, who drove him to the heart of the island, took him prisoner, and burnt him alive; according to that barbarous maxim, which made them consider every Indian, who endeavoured to throw off their usurped authority, as a slave who had rebelled against his master. When he was fastened to the stake, a Franciscan friar labouring to convert him, promised him immediate admission into the joys of heaven, if he would embrace the Christian faith.

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. ix. c. 1.

† Id. *ibid.*

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“Are there any Spaniards,” said Hatuey, after a pause, “in that region of bliss which you describe to me?”—“Yes,” replied the monk; “but only such as are worthy and good.”—“The best of them,” returned the indignant cazique, “have neither worth nor goodness: I will not go to a place where I may meet one of that accursed race*.” On pronouncing these words he was instantly committed to the flames: and this dreadful example of unjust vengeance struck the people of Cuba with such terror, that Velasquez, almost without farther opposition, annexed that extensive and fertile island to the Spanish monarchy †.

About the same time Ponce de Leon, who had acquired both wealth and fame by the reduction of Porto Rico, impatient to engage in some new project, fitted out three ships at his own expence for a voyage of discovery. He directed his course towards the Bahama islands; and after touching at several of them, he stood to the south-west, and discovered a country hitherto unknown to the Spaniards, to which he gave the name of Florida, because he fell in with it on Palm-Sunday, called *Pasqua de Flores* by his countrymen. He landed in different places, but met with such vigorous opposition from the natives as convinced him, that he had not sufficient force to attempt a settlement: he therefore contented himself with taking possession of the country in the name of his Catholic Majesty, and erecting a stone with an inscription ‡.

In the meantime Balboa was using every expedient to extend his influence in Darien, and to impress the Indians with awful ideas of the power and invincibility of the Spaniards. But though his success, in these particulars, was answerable to his wishes, all his great designs were on the point of being defeated, by a plot to seize his person, when two ships, with an hundred and fifty men, fortunately arrived from Hispaniola. This supply enabled Balboa to break the conspiracy, and reduce the mutineers to reason, without striking a blow, or shedding a drop of blood. His authority was even more firmly established than formerly: he therefore determined to go in quest of the ocean, and the rich country mentioned by the young cazique. Though sensible that his force was still too slender for such an attempt, the fear of being superseded in the government of the colony made him resolve to hazard it, and aim at performing so signal a service, as would secure him the preference to every competitor.

In order to carry his design effectually into execution, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which he laboured, Balboa began with animating his people, and inflaming their ambition with the prospect of immense wealth and immortal honour. When he had roused a spirit of emulation among them, he selected an hundred and ninety men, on whose strength, courage, and attachment to his person he

* B. de las Casas. † Herrera, dec. I. lib. ix. c. 2. ‡ Herrera, dec. I. lib. ix. c. 5. Ponce de Leon was not prompted to undertake this voyage merely by the passion of searching for new countries: he was influenced by one of those visionary ideas, which at that time often mingled with the spirit of discovery, and rendered it more enterprising. A tradition prevailed among the natives of Porto Rico, that in the isle of Bimini, one of the Bahamas, there was a fountain of such wonderful virtue as to renew the youth, and recal the vigour of every person who bathed in it: and Ponce de Leon and his followers ranged through the islands with fruitless solicitude, in hopes of finding this grand restorative, which had been the chief object of their expedition. Id. *ibid.* Robertson, *Hist. America*, book iii.

could rely. A thousand Indians attended them to carry their provisions; and to complete their warlike array, they took with them several of those fierce dogs, which were no less formidable than destructive to their naked enemies. With all these Balboa embarked in two brigantines and a great number of canoes, and sailed to the territories of the cazique Careta, by which means he shortened his march considerably. He afterwards proceeded by land, and experienced the most incredible hardships of every kind. Though the Indians had represented the breadth of the isthmus of Darien to be only a journey of six days, the Spaniards spent twenty-five in forcing their way through woods, marshes, and mountains, before they saw any prospect of terminating their labours and their sufferings, or of reaching those great objects which had inspired them with such enthusiastic courage. They had been obliged to combat several caziques; some of them were seized with the diseases peculiar to the country; and many of them were ready to sink under such uninterrupted fatigue in that sultry climate, when their guides assured them, that, from the top of the next mountain, they should behold the ocean which they so much longed to discover.

After climbing, with incredible toil, up the greater part of the steep ascent, Balboa ordered his men to halt, and advanced alone to the summit, that the first transports of his joy, or the agonies of his disappointment, might be peculiarly his own; and as soon as he beheld the South Sea, stretching in endless prospect before him, he fell on his knees, and in a kind of prophetic ecstasy, lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, as if he had foreseen all the advantages that would accrue to Spain from the discovery, returned solemn thanks to God, who had conducted him to that scene of riches and glory. Having finished this act of devotion, he turned towards his followers, who had rushed forward to join in his exultation and gratitude, and bid them behold the end of all their toils. They held on their course towards the shore with that courage and perseverance which had hitherto distinguished their character, bearing down all opposition, and surmounting every obstacle. When they arrived at the ocean, Balboa, advancing up to the middle in the waves with his buckler and sword, took possession of it in the name of his Catholic Majesty, and vowed to defend, with these arms, the right of the crown of Spain to it against all competitors*.

That part of the South Sea, which Balboa first visited, is situated to the east of Panama, and still retains the name of the Gulph of St. Michael, which he gave to it. From several of the petty princes in the neighbourhood he extorted gold and provisions: others sent both to him voluntarily, and also a considerable quantity of pearls; which he learned to his unspeakable satisfaction, were found in great abundance in the ocean which he had discovered. These served to encourage his followers; and he received accounts which confirmed his sanguine hopes of future and more lucrative advantages. All the people on the coast of the South Sea concurred in informing him, that there was a rich and power-

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. x. c. 1; Gomara, c. 62, &c. This declaration of Balboa, and the circumstances accompanying it, savour strongly of the romantic spirit of chivalry; which, blended with religion and avarice, appear to have had considerable influence on the first Spanish adventurers in the New World.

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ful kingdom situated towards the east, the inhabitants of which had certain tame animals to carry their burdens. These, from the figure of them, which the Indians drew upon the sand, though nothing more than the Lamas or sheep, afterwards found in Peru, (the only American beasts of burden) the Spaniards mistook for camels, which they somewhat resemble; and concluded, according to the erroneous theory then received, as the camel is deemed an animal peculiar to Asia, that the New World must be near to the East Indies *.

But impatient as Balboa was to visit this rich country, which has since proved such an inexhaustible source of wealth to Spain, his prudence restrained him from attempting to invade it with an handful of men, worn out by fatigue and enfeebled by disease. He therefore resolved to lead back his followers, to the settlement at Santa Maria in Darien, and to return next season with a force more adequate to such an enterprise: and in order to acquire a more perfect knowledge of the isthmus, as well as to extend the fame of the Spaniards among the Indian nations, he marched back by a different route from that which he had formerly taken. His dangers and difficulties, however, were not fewer. But to men elated with success, and animated by hope, nothing is impossible. Balboa and his companions surmounted all obstructions, and re-

A. D. 1514.

turned to Santa Maria, after an absence of four months, with greater glory and more treasure, than had hitherto been acquired by the Spaniards in any expedition in the New World †.—Nor was their success superior to their deserts. The men were all enthusiastically brave; but courage was not the only merit of their officers. Balboa displayed every quality of a great commander, inspiring confidence into his own people, and gaining the respect of the Indians; forming alliances with all the nations through which he passed; marking every circumstance that could facilitate further discoveries, and promote the design which he had planned of repeating the expedition. Francis Pizarro also distinguished himself peculiarly in this incursion; assisting with the most heroic ardour in opening a communication with that opulent and powerful empire, to which he afterwards conducted the victorious arms of Spain, and where he triumphed over the power of the Incas ‡.

Balboa's first care on his return to Darien, after an impartial division of the spoil, was to send an account to the Spanish court of the discovery he had made, with the king's fifth of the riches acquired, which he hoped would efface all bad impressions of his conduct that might be produced by the machinations of his enemies; and to demand a reinforcement of a thousand men, in order to enable him to accomplish that important conquest which he had projected. But though the discovery of the New World scarce occasioned greater joy in Spain, than the unexpected information, that a passage was at last found to the Great Southern Ocean, which it was hoped would lead to a share in the lucrative commerce of India, Ferdinand was so ungenerous as to overlook Balboa's services, which marked him out as the most proper person to finish that great undertaking which he had begun, and to appoint Pedrarias Davila governor of Darien, and supply

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. x. c. 2.

† Ut supra.

‡ Gomara, c. 64.

him

him with a force superior to what Balboa demanded. Pedrarias embarked with twelve hundred soldiers, on board fifteen stout vessels, fitted out at the public expence, with a liberality which had never been bestowed upon any former armament destined for the New World: and so sanguine were the hopes entertained from the discovery of the South Sea, where, as fame reported, it was only necessary to throw in a net and pull out gold, that fifteen hundred gentlemen voluntarily accompanied the new governor. But what was their surprise, when they arrived at Santa Maria, and found Balboa, of whose great exploits they had heard so much, and of whose opulence they had formed such high ideas, clad in a canvas jacket, with shoes made of pack-thread, employed, together with some Indians, in thatching his own hut with reeds!

Even in this simple dress, which corresponded so ill with the expectations of his new guests, Balboa received them with dignity. His personal reputation, and the fame of his discoveries, had drawn so many adventurers from the islands, that he was now more than a match for the forces which Pedrarias brought with him; but though his veteran troops murmured loudly at the injustice of the king in superseding their commander, Balboa submitted with implicit obedience to the will of his sovereign. Determined not to obstruct the public service out of private resentment, he received the new governor with all the deference due to his rank*.

The severe measures, however, of Pedrarias, who appointed a judicial inquiry to be made into the conduct of his predecessor, while acting under Nicuesa and Enciso, and imposed a considerable fine upon him, on account of the irregularities of which he had then been guilty, broke all the moderate resolutions of Balboa, and rendered the two commanders implacable enemies. The dissensions occasioned by their mutual animosity were extremely detrimental to the settlement at Santa Maria, and additional misfortunes loaded it with calamities still more fatal. A violent and destructive malady, which carried off six hundred persons in the space of a month, broke out among the soldiers who accompanied Pedrarias. An extreme scarcity of provisions augmented this distress, dejection and despair spread through the colony; many of the principal volunteers solicited their dismissal, and departed for Spain by the return of the fleet, glad to relinquish all their hopes of wealth, in order to escape from disease and famine. Those who remained were exposed to new miseries. The misconduct of Pedrarias, and the avarice of the persons he employed, raised such a multitude of enemies, as threatened the colony with total ruin. More attentive to present gain than to the means of facilitating their future progress, those rapacious adventurers, regardless of the alliances formed by Balboa, plundered without distinction wherever they marched, stripping the natives of every thing valuable, and treating them with the greatest insolence and cruelty. In consequence of these violent proceedings, all the Indian princes became hostile to the Spaniards; who were thus inconsiderately deprived of the advantages they might have

* Herrera, dec. I. lib. x. c. 3.

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reaped from the friendship of the caziques, in extending their conquests towards the South Sea, for the sake of an inconsiderable quantity of the precious metals, purchased at the expence of national honour *. Nor were the Spaniards always successful. In some of their pillaging expeditions, they were all cut off to a man; in others they were robbed of that booty which they had purchased at the expence of blood; and on many occasions they experienced hardships, or perished by sufferings only too mild for their unexampled barbarities, adequate to which no punishment can be found.

A. D. 1515.

Balboa, who during these transactions remained unemployed at Santa Maria, beheld with sorrow the execution of his favourite scheme retarded by such pernicious measures, and sent violent remonstrances to Spain against the conduct of Pedrarias, who had ruined by his tyrannical government a happy and flourishing colony. Pedrarias, on the other hand, accused his predecessor of having deceived the king by magnifying his own exploits, as well as by false representations of the opulence of the country, and the facility of prosecuting further and more valuable discoveries. Ferdinand weighed both charges; and as he naturally possessed an excellent understanding, he became sensible of his imprudence in superseding the most active and experienced officer he had in the New World, and by way of compensation to Balboa, appointed him Adelantado, or lieutenant-governor of the countries upon the South Sea, with very extensive powers, enjoining Pedrarias, at the same time, to assist him in all his enterprises, and to consult with him concerning every measure which he himself should pursue †.

But Balboa's commission was for a while merely nominal. Enraged at the honour conferred upon a man, whom he considered as his implacable enemy, Pedrarias, in violation of his instructions, used all possible means to thwart the designs, blast the reputation, and endanger the life of the adelantado. Instead of leaving the care of farther discoveries to Balboa, and supplying him with the necessary force, he sent Gaspar de Morales, one of his officers, with sixty men towards the South Sea, apparently with no other intention than to plunder the Indians, and incense them so much against the Spaniards, that all the adelantado's endeavours to re-unite them, and form alliances, might be fruitless; and consequently his utmost diligence to plant colonies, and make conquests across the isthmus, be exerted to no purpose.

Mortified, however, as Balboa was at this treatment, he had no remedy. The power of the governor was uncontrollable, and the adelantado's fortune being exhausted by the payment of his fine, and other exactions of Pedrarias, he was unable to make suitable preparations for taking possession of his new government. He could only vent his grief in letters to the court, charging Pedrarias with the most fatal errors, and the most obstinate contempt of his instructions. A dread of the consequences which might result from these, and the interposition of the bishop of Darien, who had formed the highest idea of Balboa's merit, at length brought about a reconciliation; and in order to cement this union

* *Ibid.* Relacion de B. de las Casas.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. i. c. 1.

more firmly, the governor agreed to give his daughter in marriage to the adelantado*.

CHAP. III.

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Balboa, in appearance, now enjoyed the governor's favour, and was appointed to settle a colony at the port of Acla. There he prepared timber, which was carried by land to the river de la Ballas; where, after various obstructions, and incredible misfortunes, he built two brigantines, with which he entered the South Sea. Many adventurers resorted to him: he increased the number of his vessels to four; and in these, with three hundred chosen men, (a force superior to that with which Pizarro afterwards undertook the same expedition) he was preparing to invade Peru, when he received an unexpected message from his father-in-law.

As the reconciliation of Pedrarias with Balboa had never been cordial, the progress made by the adelantado revived the governor's ancient enmity, and added to its rancour. He dreaded the elevation and prosperity of a man, whom he had so deeply injured: he suspected that success would encourage him to aim at an independent jurisdiction; and so violently did the passions of hatred, fear, and jealousy operate upon his mind, that, in order to gratify them, he scrupled not to defeat an expedition of the utmost importance to his country. Under false but plausible prettexts, he desired the adelantado to postpone his voyage for a short time, and to repair to Acla, that he might have an interview with him. Balboa repaired to the place appointed, with the unsuspecting confidence of a soldier, and the firmness of a man conscious of no crime; but no sooner did he make his appearance, than he was arrested by order of Pedrarias: an accusation of disloyalty to the king, and of an intention to revolt against the governor, was preferred against him; and he was tried, condemned, and publicly executed, notwithstanding the warm intercessions of his countrymen, who universally considered him as more capable of forming and executing great designs, than any officer that had yet commanded in America†.

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In consequence of the death of Balboa, the expedition which he had planned was relinquished; and Pedrarias was not only screened from the punishment due to his violence and injustice, by the powerful patronage of the bishop of Burgos and other courtiers, but continued in the government, notwithstanding the manifold proofs of his misconduct, and the signal services of the man whose blood he had cruelly spilt. Soon after this tragical event, he obtained permission to remove the colony from its unhealthy station at Santa Maria to Panama, on the opposite side of the isthmus‡; where, though it did not gain much in point of healthfulness, the commodiousness of the situation greatly contributed to make the Spaniards more intimately acquainted with the vast countries bordering on the South Sea, as well as to facilitate their conquests in that quarter.

During these transactions in Darien, and previous to the death of Balboa, Juan Diaz de Solis, an eminent Spanish navigator, in two ships fitted out by Ferdinand for the discovery of the Spice Islands, sailed along the coast of South America, as far as the mouth of the great river de la Plata, where endeavouring

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. i. c. 3.

† Ibid. c. 1—4.

‡ Ut sup. c. 4.

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to make a descent, he and several of his crew were slain by the natives; who, in sight of the ships, cut their bodies in pieces, roasted, and devoured them. Terrified at this shocking spectacle, and discouraged by the loss of their commander, the surviving Spaniards made the best of their way to Europe, without attempting any farther discovery*.

But important discoveries were soon after made in other parts of the New World. One hundred of the gentlemen adventurers, who left the colony at Santa Maria during the scarcity of provisions, had embarked for the island of Cuba, which was still governed by Velasquez, as the deputy of Don Diego Columbus; and under his prudent administration it was become one of the most flourishing of the Spanish settlements. Velasquez, who aimed at rendering his authority altogether independent, received his distressed countrymen with the greatest cordiality, and promised to embrace the first opportunity of promoting their interest. As Cuba lay to the west of all the islands occupied by the Spaniards, and as the ocean which stretches beyond it towards that quarter, had not hitherto been explored, the governor was naturally invited, by these circumstances, to attempt new discoveries. A hint to this purpose was offered to the adventurers from Darien; and as they were prepared for any desperate project, they instantly seized the idea, and entered into an association to undertake a voyage of discovery. Velasquez countenanced the design; and Francisco Hernandez Cordova, an eminent planter, celebrated for his wealth, valour, and public spirit, who was at the expence of the expedition, was persuaded to command it. He accordingly sailed from St. Jago de Cuba, on the 8th of February 1517, with an hundred and ten active volunteers, on board three small vessels, furnished with every thing requisite for traffic or war†.

Cordova, by the advice of his chief pilot, Antonio Alaminos, who had served under the great Columbus, stood directly west; relying on the opinion of that illustrious navigator, who uniformly maintained, that a westerly course would lead to the most important discoveries. On the twenty-first day after their departure, they saw land, which proved to be the eastern part of that large peninsula, projecting from the continent of America, which still retains its original name of Yucatan. As the ships approached the shore, two canoes came off full of people, who were kindly received by Cordova. They were dressed in short cotton jackets, without sleeves, and had pieces of the same cloth wrapped round their middle; an astonishing spectacle to the Spaniards, who had found every other part of the New World possessed by naked savages. But though it was evident, from this circumstance, that the natives of Yucatan had made some little progress in the arts, it was also observable, that the dress, arms, ships, and beards of the Spaniards, were great novelties to them. From the favourable report of his subjects, who were delighted with some trifling presents which Cordova had made to them, the cazique next day approached the ships, with twelve canoes filled with men, crying out *Conez Cotoche*, "Come to my house;"

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. i. c. 1.

† Ibid. c. 3.

whence the Spaniards gave the name of Cape Cotoche to this promontory, which lies opposite, and at no great distance from the western extremity of the island of Cuba. And so pressing was this prince in his solicitations, and so great the shew of friendship made by the Indians in general, that Cordova yielded to their entreaties: he went ashore; and as he advanced into the country, he observed with new wonder some large houses built with stone and mortar. But while he was gratifying his curiosity in surveying these specimens of growing refinement, he was routed from his contemplations by its too common attendant, treachery. A body of Indians, planted by the cazique behind a neighbouring wood, rushed out from their ambuscade on a signal given, and surrounded the Spaniards. They were clad in armour of quilted cotton, and furnished with targets, wooden swords edged with flint, wooden cutlasses, spears, slings, and bows. Their heads were adorned with plumes of feathers, and their faces bedaubed with a kind of paint, which rendered them perfectly hedious. They began the attack with frightful shrieks and howling, to which they joined the sound of several instruments, rather noisy than musical; pouring in upon the Spaniards, at the same time, full flights of arrows. Cordova's companions did not exceed twenty-five; but they made so brave a defence, and plied their fire-arms with so much dexterity, that the Indians, struck with terror by the repeated explosion, and amazed at the execution done by those and other weapons of their new enemies, fled with precipitation: and Cordova suddenly quitted a country where he had met with such an hostile reception, carrying off with him two prisoners, who afterwards embraced the Christian faith, and the furniture of a small temple, which he plundered in his retreat.

On leaving Cape Cotoche, Cordova continued his course towards the west; and in sixteen days arrived at Campeachy, on the other side of the peninsula. There the natives received him more hospitably than those he had last visited; but not finding a proper supply of water, he proceeded some leagues farther along the coast, and landed at the mouth of a river near Potonchan. Every precaution was here taken to prevent a new surprise; the troops being drawn up in form, to protect the sailors employed in filling the casks, and boats kept ready to receive both, in case of any pressing necessity. But all these prudent regulations were insufficient. The Indians rushed upon them with such desperate resolution, and in such numbers, that forty-seven of the Spaniards were killed upon the spot; and the rest, all covered with wounds, with difficulty made their way to the ships. Cordova himself was wounded in twelve different places, and died soon after his return to Cuba, to which he now hastened with his shattered forces*.

This expedition, notwithstanding its disastrous conclusion, served rather to animate than damp the spirit of enterprise among the Spaniards. They had discovered an extensive, and seemingly a rich country, situated at no great distance from one of their most flourishing colonies, and inhabited by a people far su-

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. i. c. 3. Oviedo, lib. xvii. Gomara, c. 52.

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perior in improvement to any they had hitherto visited in America. These circumstances were sufficient to excite romantic hopes. Great numbers offered to engage in a new expedition; and Velasquez solicitous, as has been already observed, to distinguish himself by some service so meritorious as might entitle him to claim the independent government of Cuba, not only encouraged their ardour, but at his own expence fitted out four ships for the voyage. The command of this squadron, on board which two hundred and forty volunteers embarked, was given to Juan de Grijalva, a young man of known abilities, assisted by Antonio Alaminos, principal pilot in Cordova's expedition.

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Grijalva sailed from St. Jago de Cuba on the 8th of April 1518. Alaminos held the same course as in the former voyage, but the violence of the currents carrying the vessels to the south, the first land which they discovered was an island to the east of Yucatan, since known by the name of Cozumel. As all the inhabitants had fled to the woods and mountains on the approach of the Spaniards, and all endeavours to establish an intercourse with them proved fruitless, Grijalva kept on his course along the coast of Yucatan, and without any remarkable occurrence, reached Potonchan, on the opposite side of the peninsula. A desire of revenging the death of his countrymen, who had been slain there, concurred with his ideas of sound policy, in prompting him to land, and chastise the Indians of that district with such exemplary rigour, as might strike terror into the neighbouring tribes. He accordingly disembarked his troops, and carried ashore some field pieces; but the Indians fought with so much courage, that the Spaniards gained the victory with difficulty, and were confirmed in their opinion of the superior valour of the natives of this country.

From Potonchan, Grijalva continued his voyage towards the west, keeping as near to the shore as possible, and casting anchor every night, in order to prevent the accidents to which he might be exposed in an unknown sea. During the day, the eyes of the Spaniards were turned continually towards land, with an equal mixture of surprise and wonder at the beauty and novelty of the objects which they beheld. In the villages seated along the coast, they could distinguish houses built of stone, which seemed white and lofty at a distance: these, in the warmth of their admiration, they mistook for the towers and pinnacles of spacious cities; and one of the soldiers happening to remark, that the country resembled Spain in its appearance, Grijalva, in a kind of transport, called it New Spain*; a name which was afterwards extended to all Mexico, and which still distinguishes that large and opulent province of the Spanish empire in America.

Grijalva and his companions landed at the mouth of a river, to which the natives gave the name of Tabasco; and the fame of their victory at Potonchan, having reached this place, they were permitted to disembark without obstruction. The natives, however, discovered their jealousy, by surrounding the boats with a number of canoes filled with armed men; but Grijalva, willing to allay their fears, sent the two Indians taken by Cordova, and baptised by the names of Melichor and Julian, to acquaint the Tabascans, that his purpose was to esta-

* De Solis, lib. i. c. 5.

blish a friendly intercourse, which might prove mutually beneficial. In consequence of this information, and some presents of European toys, all hostile intentions were laid aside, and the Spaniards were plentifully supplied with provisions. The cazique in person visited Grijalva, and without hesitation went on board his ship, presenting him with a complete suit of gold armour; with a wooden helmet plated with gold, and studded with stones resembling emeralds; with several breast-plates and coverings for targets of solid gold, together with six collars, and various other ornaments of the same metal, to an immense value. Grijalva, in return, presented the cazique with several changes of fine linen; with a coat of crimson velvet, and a cap of the same; with knives, scissars, beads, bells, and other trinkets, which he prized above all the gold of the New World*.

Several of the Spaniards were well disposed to remain in a country which exhibited so many specimens of riches and fertility; but as it was evident, notwithstanding the cazique's liberality and kindness, that he was not inclined to favour a colony, Grijalva ordered them to re-embark, being sensible that the people were too warlike and powerful to permit him to establish a settlement by force. As he continued his course along the shore, the Indians were seen on the coast in a warlike posture, with shields of tortoise-shell; which, by the reflection of the sun beams, made a brilliant and martial appearance. The country seemed to be extremely populous; and in many places the natives held up flags of cotton upon long poles, as signals for the Spaniards to land. These invitations tempted Grijalva to send ashore Francisco de Montejo, one of his officers, accompanied by twenty soldiers, with orders to give immediate notice to the shipping if he found the Indians inclined to hostilities. When Montejo landed, the natives perfumed him with incense of gum Copal, offering him fowls, fish, bread, and fruits of various kinds. Encouraged by these civilities, Grijalva went ashore in person, attended by a large body of his followers, all desirous of sharing in the liberalities of a people, who appeared to be equally opulent and generous. He was received on landing with the most profound respect, by the governors of the district. A traffic with the inhabitants soon took place; and the Spaniards, in the space of six days, obtained ornaments of gold to the value of fifteen thousand pesos, in exchange for European toys, and trinkets of small value†.

Leaving this place, which was situated in the province since known by the name of Guaxaca, Grijalva continued his course towards the west, and discovered several little islands. One he called *Isla Blanca*, a second *la Verde*, and a third the *Isle of Sacrifices*; because here the Spaniards beheld, for the first time, the horrid spectacle of human victims, which the barbarous superstition of the natives offered to their gods. He touched at another small island, to which he gave the name of *St. Juan de Ulua*, where the same frightful objects were presented to his view: he also landed on the continent, which was only half a league distant, and thence dispatched Pedro de Alvarado, one of his officers, to Velasquez, with

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. i. c. 4. Gomara, c. 52.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. ii. c. 1.

an account of the important discoveries he had made, and with all the treasure he had acquired by trafficking with the natives.

After the departure of Alvarado, Grijalva proceeded with the remaining vessels along the coast, as far as the river Panuco, the country still appearing to be populous, fertile, and opulent. During this navigation several of his officers contended, that it was not enough to have discovered those delightful regions, or to have performed the empty ceremony of taking possession of them for the crown of Castile, and that their glory was incomplete, unless they planted a colony in some proper station, which might secure the Spanish nation a footing in the country. Some even went so far as to affirm, that, with the reinforcements which they were certain of receiving, **they** might subject the whole to the dominion of Ferdinand. But Grijalva, though possessed of both ambition and courage, was destitute of the superior talents capable of forming or executing so great a plan; he therefore judged it more prudent, as he had fulfilled the purpose of his voyage, and his provisions were almost exhausted, to return to Cuba, from which he had been absent near six months*.

Meanwhile Velasquez, elated with the information brought by Alvarado, and transported at the sight of the treasure, had dispatched a person in whom he could confide, to carry an account of the success of this expedition to Spain, and to solicit such an increase of authority as might enable him to attempt the conquest of the rich countries discovered by his means. Without waiting, however, for the return of the messenger, or the arrival of Grijalva, of whose courage or conduct he was become so diffident, that he resolved no longer to employ him, he began to make preparations for an armament so powerful, as might prove, under an able and gallant commander, equal to the important enterprise he had in view. All things were soon in great forwardness: but as this new excursion terminated in one of the most memorable revolutions in the history of mankind, it will be proper to introduce the account of it with some degree of form †.

C H A P.

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. ii. c. 1. Oviedo, lib. xvii.

† The author might here, in imitation of a learned historian, suspend the curiosity of the reader, in order to introduce an elaborate dissertation concerning the character of the Americans; to prove that, though distant from the rest of the human species, in mental as well as personal qualities, they are the descendants of the same common parent; and he might inquire with systematical solemnity, whether America was first peopled from the north of Europe or of Asia: but as he is fully persuaded, that the original inhabitants of America were natives of the soil, this last inquiry becomes unnecessary; and as he has ever been of opinion, that the characters of nations, whether savage or civilized, are more perfectly obtained from a particular delineation of their manners and customs, than from any general theoretical survey, (the distinguishing characteristics even of barbarous tribes, though sprung from the same common stock, being often observed to differ essentially,) he proposes to continue the thread of his narration. However, he thinks it proper to notice these leading distinctions, which mark the Americans as a particular race of men, and which induce him to consider them as aborigines of that portion of the earth which they inhabit.

The first peculiarity that strikes us on the view of a native of the New World is his copper colour, which is nearly the same in every latitude; beneath the vertical rays of the sun, in the milder climates, and in the regions of eternal frost. The second grand personal distinction is,



C H A P. IV.

The Invasion of Mexico, and the Progress of the Spanish Arms, till the Arrival of Cortez at the Capital of that opulent and extensive Empire.

CHAP. IV.

A. D. 1518.

THE most embarrassing situation in which a person possessed of delegated power can find himself, is to be obliged to undertake what he distrusts his ability to perform, or to employ another in a service that, properly executed, would do honour to his own character, and which may exalt his deputy above him. Such was the situation of Velasquez, when he had almost completed that armament, destined to attempt the conquest of the rich country discovered by Grijalva. Though a man of aspiring ambition, and not without talents for government, he had neither that daring courage, nor that vigour and activity of mind, necessary for the command of such an armament, or which could incite him to conduct it in person. In order to extricate himself from this dilemma, he fondly aimed at impossibilities: he formed the visionary scheme, not only of conquering by means of a deputy, but of securing to himself the glory of conquests so made. A little observation made the difficulty of realizing this chime-

the want of a beard, or hair upon any part of what is properly called the body. From this peculiarity arises a third, of which the second appears to be the symptom; namely a defect in manhood, or at least an almost total insensibility to the passion of love, and an indifference to the pleasure of the sexes. This indifference is universal, though not every where in the same degree. The heads of both sexes are also universally covered with lank black hair, and the bodies of both are alike smooth; but if we may judge from the ardour with which the American women meet the embraces of the Spaniards, the coldness of desire seems to be more peculiar to the men.

From these general characteristics, however, must be excepted one American nation; namely, the Esquimaux, who inhabit the country extending from the coast of Labrador towards the pole, as far as it is habitable, and appear to be a race different from the rest of the natives of the New World. Their complexion though swarthy, by being continually exposed to the rigour of a cold climate, inclines to the European white rather than to the copper colour of America, and the men have beards, and other signs of virility. From this circumstance, perhaps, they assume to themselves by way of eminence, as opposed to the other Americans, the name of Keralit or Men; a dignity which would certainly be sustained by them, notwithstanding the inferiority of their stature, in a female court of honour.—Those who are inquisitive on this subject, or doubtful in regard to the foregoing facts, may consult Henepin, Mœurs des Sauvages, Ulloa, Notic. Americ. Recherches Philos. sur les Americains, Ellis's Voyage to Hudson's Bay, and Robertson, Hist. Americ. b. iv.

Some readers may perhaps be surprised, that nothing is here said of the supposed giants of Patagonia; but the existence of such a race is not yet sufficiently authenticated to be made the foundation of historical reasoning. The most intelligent navigators who have visited Patagonia assert, that the natives, though stout and well made, are not of a size so extraordinary as to be distinguished from the rest of the human species; and as experience tells us, that if animals any where rise above the usual standard of their kind, it is in mild climates, or where they find the most nutritive food in the greatest abundance, it is not likely that man should attain a superiority of size and vigour, beyond what he has reached in any other part of the earth, in the uncultivated waste of the Magellanic regions. But that point will be cleared up, and various other particulars relative to the Americans noticed, in the history of the different countries.

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rical idea conspicuous: such officers as appeared worthy of being trusted with the success of the expedition were too high spirited, he perceived, to be the servile instruments of his will, while such as seemed more docile were unequal to the charge. But though Velasquez could not find a person, who united the very opposite qualities of courage and meanness, the ability to command with the most abject submission, (for such a one only would have suited his purpose) his choice was directed to an officer, who possessed every requisite of a general and soldier, without such reputation or consequence as to excite his jealousy. This officer was Fernando Cortez; a man whose exploits have placed him on a level with the most illustrious heroes of ancient or modern times, and of whom it will be proper to give some account, before we follow him to that scene of riches and glory to which he conducted his countrymen.

Cortez was a native of the province of Estremadura in Spain; and being destined by his parents, who were of noble descent, but very moderate fortune, to the study of the law, he spent some years at the university of Salamanca. But an academic life not suiting his ardent and active genius, he obtained his father's consent to engage in the service of his country, and prosecute his fortune as an adventurer in arms. In consequence of this resolution, young Cortez proposed to embark for Italy, in order to learn the rudiments of the military art under the famous Gonzalvo de Cordova, commonly known by the name of the Great Captain, then at the head of the Spanish army in that country; but being prevented by a dangerous illness from accompanying a reinforcement bound for Naples, he turned his views towards the New World, whither he was allured by the prospect of the advantages he might derive from the powerful patronage of his kinsman Obando, at that time governor of Hispaniola. He accordingly set sail for St. Domingo in 1504, being then in the nineteenth year of his age; and his reception on his arrival, was equal to his most sanguine hopes. He was employed by Obando in several honourable and lucrative stations; but these not satisfying his ambition, he obtained permission to accompany Velasquez in his expedition to Cuba, in 1511. In this service he distinguished himself eminently; and though he had afterwards some violent contests with Velasquez, which had almost cost him his life, that gentleman was still so sensible of his merit, that he took him again into favour, made him a liberal grant of lands and Indians, the usual recompence of deserving adventurers in the New World, and even raised him to the office of Alcade of St. Jago*.

Such

* De Solis, lib. i. c. 9. It should seem that Dr. Robertson, in giving an account of the conquest of Mexico, did not think his own reputation safe, without destroying that of this celebrated writer, on whom he hath passed a most cruel censure. The Doctor had reason to be jealous; for De Solis is the most elegant, the least superstitious, and least credulous of all the Spanish historians, who have treated of American affairs: and notwithstanding some redundant and ill chosen metaphors, his history of the conquest of Mexico will ever be considered, by men of taste and judgement, as one of the most excellent historical productions in modern times. He was historiographer and secretary to the king of Spain; and as such had opportunities of information to which no foreigner could have had access. His chief fault seems to be, a too ardent zeal for the character of Cortez, which leads

Such was the condition of Fernando Cortez, when appointed by Don Diego Velasquez to the command of that armament from which he expected so great an accession of riches and glory, and in regard to the success of which he was to jealous. Velasquez was directed to this choice, equally unfortunate for himself and advantageous to his country, by Amador de Leres, the royal treasurer, and Andres Duero, his own secretary; two persons in whose judgment he chiefly confided, and whom he consulted on all momentous occasions. He therefore flattered himself that he had at last found, what he had so long sought for in vain, a general not likely to become his rival in power, yet able to execute his ambitious projects; for though Cortez had not hitherto acted as commander in chief, he had displayed, on several trying occasions, such uncommon military talents, as made all men of discernment regard him as capable of performing the greatest achievements, and of conducting the most extensive operations: and Velasquez hoped by this new mark of confidence to attach him for ever to his interest.

The character of Cortez is differently represented by historians: but they all agree, that to great strength of body, and the ability of enduring the most excessive fatigue, he united great vigour and perseverance of mind; that he had a graceful person, an engaging aspect, was singular for dexterity in all warlike exercises, and possessed in an eminent degree that address and insinuation necessary to acquire an ascendancy over the minds of others. To these high qualities his admirers add, a sagacity that foresaw every thing; a presence of mind not to be disturbed by the most untoward events; calm prudence in concerting his schemes, steady resolution in executing them; animated by that enthusiastic love of glory, which has ever been considered as the leading qualification in a hero, and which may rather be said to command success, than to earn it. But the moral portrait of this extraordinary man is best delineated in his actions; by which the reader, if he should judge it necessary, may correct the foregoing sketch.

Having received his commission from the governor, with the warmest expressions of respect and gratitude, Cortez immediately erected his standard before his

leads him on some occasions to extenuate the errors of that commander, and to exaggerate his virtues. Gomara, Cortez's domestic chaplain after his return to Spain, and who first wrote an account of this conquest, is equally partial to his hero, and full of other extravagancies. Castillo was one of Cortez's companions in the expedition to Mexico, and wrote his history of the conquest of that empire, in order to detract from the merit of Cortez, or at least from that which Gomara had assigned him, and to exalt his own, and that of his companions of an inferior class. Herrera was historiographer to his Catholic majesty, and predecessor to de Solis in that office. He appears to have been a man of patient industry, but little genius, and has written a general history of Spanish America, and all the discoveries connected with it, from the first voyage of Columbus to the year 1554; four years later than the period at which Dr. Robertson concludes the narrative part of his work lately published on the same subject. But though Herrera deserves great praise for the prodigious number of facts which he has collected and arranged in chronological order, his account of the conquest of Mexico is less perfect, even in respect to information, than that of De Solis, who, besides what original papers afforded him, has taken from Castillo every thing worthy of preserving; among which are many curious particulars, entirely omitted, or misrepresented by Herrera.

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own house, appeared in a military dress, and assumed all the ensigns of his new dignity. He exerted his utmost influence and activity in persuading his friends to engage in the service: he supplied the wants of such as were unable to equip themselves in a manner suitable to their rank; and in order to insure the success of the expedition, he not only expended all his ready money, but all that he could raise by mortgaging his estates, in purchasing an extraordinary supply of provisions and military stores. Laudable, however, as this zeal was, his disappointed competitors were malicious enough to give it a turn to his disadvantage*: they represented him as aiming already, by an ostentatious and interested liberality, at acquiring an independent authority over his troops. They reminded Velasquez of his former dissensions with the man in whom he now reposed so much confidence: they even insinuated that all his generosity had not been able to efface from the mind of Cortez the resentment of past injuries; and they entreated him to consider these circumstances maturely, before it was too late to repair an error which might prove fatal to his honour and his life, as well as to the public service, and the interests of religion and his country.

Nov. 15.

Velasquez at first received such remonstrances as what they really were, the effusions of malice and disappointed ambition; but they soon made so strong an impression on his suspicious mind, that Cortez observed some symptoms of growing alienation, and by the advice of his friends hastened his departure, lest these should break out in open violence. He accordingly set sail from St. Jago, after taking leave of the governor in a friendly manner, and proceeded to Trinidad, a small settlement on the same side of the island. There he was joined by a great number of volunteers, many of whom were persons of the best condition in Cuba; a circumstance which furnished his enemies with fresh arguments to impeach his fidelity, and which enabled them still farther to poison the governor's mind with distrust and jealousy. These produced the desired effect: the armament being no longer under the eye of Velasquez, imagination co-operated with the suggestions of envy and personal animosity in increasing his suspicions, and his fears of the man whom he lately esteemed so worthy of the important command with which he had vested him; and he hastily dispatched two couriers to Trinidad, with letters to all his confidants, and express orders to Verdugo, the chief magistrate there, to proceed against Cortez in a judicial way, and deprive him of his commission†.

But Cortez had already made such progress in gaining the esteem and confidence of his troops, as encouraged him on the first intimation of this design to assemble them in a body; to inform them of the machinations of his enemies, and request their advice how to act; declaring, that he should consider himself as innocent or guilty, by the judgment which they should pass on his conduct. The report was answerable to his expectations. The soldiers to a man declared, that

* Herrera represents this whole affair to the disadvantage of Cortez; but he is contradicted by Castillo, who, as De Solis well observes, cannot be suspected of partiality.

† Castillo, c. 20. Gomara, c. 7. De Solis, lib. i. c. 11.

they

they were subjects only to the king of Spain ; that they knew no commander but Cortez, and were determined to defend his authority with the last drop of their blood. He informed Verdugo of the resolution of his troops ; and hinted, that as he had already found it difficult to restrain them within the bounds of obedience, he could not answer for the consequences, should that magistrate proceed to execute his instructions. As Verdugo was a man of discernment and candour, he was sensible of the injustice of the governor's orders ; of the merit of the general ; of the danger that would attend any attempt to supersede him, and the detriment that the public service must sustain from the divisions which would necessarily ensue : he therefore told Cortez, that he would not only suspend the execution of his instructions, but use his utmost endeavours to dissuade Velasquez from his rash purpose. In this conciliatory plan he was joined by all the gentlemen of the town and fleet, who had any influence with Velasquez ; and Cortez accompanied their remonstrances with a letter from himself, complaining in the gentlest terms of the governor's distrust, of the confidence reposed in his enemies, and the facility with which calumnies injurious to his reputation were listened to*.

Having taken these steps, which he judged necessary to his own security, and sufficient to quiet the jealousy of Velasquez, Cortez set sail for Havana. During this short voyage, he was separated from the fleet in a storm, and in great danger of being shipwrecked ; an accident which had almost proved fatal to his authority. All the other ships arriving safe at the place of rendezvous, but no accounts being heard of the admiral for the space of a week, the adventurers were divided in their opinion of his fate, as well as how to act : some regarded him as lost, others advised that vessels might be sent in search of him, and a few proposed that a commander should be appointed in his absence. Of the last opinion was Diego de Ordaz ; who, as the friend and confidant of Velasquez, thought he would assuredly be confirmed in the command, if once nominated by the soldiers. In this scheme, however, he was disappointed by the sudden appearance of Cortez, who was received by the troops with joyful acclamations, and immediately set up his standard in the city, where he was joined by several gentlemen of rank, valour, and experience. He sent the artillery on shore, to be cleaned and proved ; gave an order for a great number of cotton quilts, in the form of large jackets, which were found to be a sufficient defence against the weapons of the Indians, and were lighter than the Spanish armour : he exercised his soldiers in the use of their fire-arms, at that time but imperfectly understood, and taught them the several evolutions necessary in action. Every preparation was at last completed, and the day was fixed for the departure of the fleet, when positive injunctions arrived from Velasquez to Pedro Barba, governor of Havana, instantly to arrest Cortez, and send him prisoner to St. Jago, under a strong guard. These orders had been issued by Velasquez not from any new cause of jealousy, but from a conviction that he ought no longer to rely on a man of whom he had

* Ut supra.

† De Solis, lib. i. c. 12.

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so openly discovered his distrust; he therefore resolved to make one attempt more, in order to wrest the power out of such dangerous hands.

But Velasquez was no better obeyed on this, than on the former occasion. Before the arrival of the messenger, Cortez had notice of his danger, and therefore was prepared to meet it. Violently incensed at this new attack upon his honour, as well as on his liberty and authority, he began less scrupulously to think of providing for his own safety, and the success of the armament under his command, in which his friends and the public in general were so deeply interested. When he reflected on the indignities he had sustained, he blamed his own patience, and was inclined to believe, that the virtue of obedience may be carried to a criminal excess, and degenerate into mere pusillanimity. These considerations determined him to come to an open rupture with Velasquez, from whom he had now nothing to fear, as he was certain of the affection of his troops. His first step was to remove from Havana Diego de Ordaz, an officer of great merit, but whose fidelity he had reason to suspect, both on account of that attempt which he had made to supplant him in the command and his known attachment to Velasquez. He gave him the care of a vessel destined to take on board some provisions in a small harbour beyond Cape Antonio. Having thus made sure of the absence of the only man he had occasion to fear, without seeming to distrust him, Cortez shewed himself to the troops, and acquainted them with the new persecution to which he was exposed by the malice of his enemies. As officers and soldiers were equally impatient to set out on an enterprise, in preparing for which most of them had expended all their fortune, they expressed their astonishment and indignation at that illiberal jealousy to which Velasquez seemed determined to sacrifice not only the honour of their general, but all their sanguine hopes of wealth and glory: they repeated their declarations to Cortez, of eternal attachment to his person and fortune, entreating him not to abandon the important station to which he had so good a title; and they became so tumultuous, that it was with difficulty he could prevent them from flying to arms. Nor were all his arguments sufficient to quiet their clamorous and intemperate zeal, till Pedro Barba publicly declared, that he would delay the execution of his orders, being unwilling to be the instrument of so flagrant an act of injustice and oppression. This declaration was received with transports of military applause: the menaces of the soldiers were converted into joyful acclamations; and Barba shewed the sincerity of his intentions, by excusing himself to Velasquez for not interposing in an affair of so much delicacy and consequence, remonstrating on the impropriety of any attempt against an officer so beloved by his troops, and representing in the strongest terms the commotions excited among the soldiers by the report of the injury intended their commander. He concluded with pathetic solicitations, that Velasquez would endeavour to regain Cortez by acts of friendship and generosity, and rely on his gratitude for what could be accomplished neither by threats, force, nor persuasion*.

* De Solis, lib. i. c. 13.

This difficulty being surmounted, Cortez prepared with all expedition for his departure : but the armament which he conducted, though the united effort of the Spanish power in Cuba, and though destined for the conquest of a populous and extensive country, by report a great and powerful empire, was so inconsiderable as must astonish the present age. The fleet consisted of eleven vessels, the largest of which, called the Capitana or Admiral, did not exceed an hundred tons. On board of these were embarked six hundred and seventeen men ; of whom five hundred and eight belonged to the land service, the rest being sailors or artificers : and as the use of fire-arms, even among the nations of Europe, was at that time confined to a few battalions of regularly disciplined infantry, only thirteen soldiers were armed with muskets. They had no more than sixteen horses, ten small field-pieces, and four falconets*.

Cortez divided the soldiers into eleven companies, according to the number of the ships, to every one of which he appointed a captain : and to each of these captains, when on shore, was committed the command of that company, which had been on board the vessel he commanded, while at sea. Their names were, Juan Velasquez de Leon, Alonso Hernandez Portocarrero, Francisco de Montejo, Christoval de Olid, Juan de Escalante, Francisco de Morla, Pedro de Alvarado, Francisco de Saucedo, Alonso Davila, Gines de Nortes. Cortez himself commanded the Capitana. The artillery was under the direction of Francisco de Orozco, an officer formed in the wars of Italy. The experienced Alaminos acted as chief pilot.

These appointments being made, and proper orders drawn up, in case of any unexpected contingency, Cortez and his followers quitted Havana, animated by religious enthusiasm, the love of glory, and the thirst of gold. No less eager to plunder the opulent country whither they were bound, than zealous to propagate the Christian faith among its inhabitants, they set sail with that confidence, slender as their armament was, which arises from security of success, rather than with the solicitude natural to men going upon dangerous service. Persuaded of the divine protection, a large cross was displayed in their standards, with this inscription : " Let us follow the cross, for under this sign we shall be victorious †."

The island of Cozumel was the place appointed for the rendezvous of the fleet, in case of separation. There Pedro de Alvarado first arrived. He had been dispatched towards the north coast of Cuba, in search of Diego de Ordaz ; but missing his course, he steered for Cozumel, and landed near a small town, which he remembered since the voyage he had performed with Grijalva. Finding the place deserted, and believing inaction in a soldier to be a crime, Alvarado marched with a party of his men to survey the country, and came to another town, which was likewise abandoned by the inhabitants. This last place he pillaged, seizing upon all the provisions he could find, and whatever else appeared to be valuable : Nothing escaped his zeal or his rapacity. He destroyed the idols in a temple, and despoiled it of all its gold ornaments, with-

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* Castillo, c. 19. Herrera, dec. II. lib. ii. c. 3.

† Id. ibid.

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out reflecting that he was injuring the service, by giving the Indians bad impressions of the Spaniards.

When Alvarado returned to his ship with this booty, and a few prisoners, he was joined by Cortez and the fleet : and on giving an account of his conduct, he was publicly censured by the general, and the prisoners were set at liberty ; being informed, before their departure, by means of the Indian interpreter Melichor, whom I have already had occasion to mention, how disagreeable the injuries done them were to Cortez, and how contrary to the general intention of the expedition, which was to cultivate friendship and form alliances with all the Indian nations. The booty taken by Alvarado's soldiers was likewise restored, and some presents were made to the captives, in hopes that, from their favourable report, an intercourse with the natives might be established, and all apprehensions of violence removed.

Cortez now encamped for three days on the coast, lest by advancing farther into the country, he should give fresh alarm to the inhabitants, before the informations of the captives had quieted their fears. This interval he employed in mustering his army, and in setting before them the importance of the expedition in which they were engaged ; nor did he conceal from them the toils and perils which they must expect to encounter, in order to render it successful. " I have no design," said he, " to diminish the danger of our undertaking. We must expect obstinate engagements, incredible fatigues, and such multitudes of enemies, as will require the full exertion of all our valour : but the glory of conquest will be the greater. You have been accustomed to fight and to endure hardships, in those islands which Spain has already subdued. The object of our present expedition is more important : we must therefore pursue it with superior vigour, proportioning our courage to the greatness and the difficulty of our enterprise. We are few in number ; but union multiplies armies : in our agreement will consist our strength. We must all, my companions, be of one mind to resolve, and as one hand to execute. Our interests are the same, and the wealth and the glory of conquest shall be equally shared by the deserving *."

Before Cortez had finished his harangue, notice was brought that the Indians began to appear at a distance, in small parties. He immediately put himself in a posture of defence, in order to guard against the possibility of surprise ; ranging the soldiers, however, behind the lines, that they might not discourage the natives by their hostile appearance. In consequence of this precaution, some of the more resolute Indians ventured into the camp ; where they were so kindly received, that they called to their companions to follow their example, on which great numbers came, and mingled with the Spaniards without fear, surveying every thing with signs of wonder and amazement. Next day Cortez was honoured with a visit from the cazique, accompanied with a present ; both which he re-

* De Solis, lib. i. c. 14. In the introduction to this speech, as found in the author here quoted, Cortez makes use of an argument highly characteristic of the times. " We may rely, says he, on the aid of Heaven ; for God in fighting our battles, will fight his own !"

ceived with profound acknowledgments, and protestations of his sincere desire to cultivate a perpetual friendship with so respectable a prince. In answer to these professions the Indian chief replied, that he accepted the friendship offered, and would preserve it as a man who understood the value of the gift.

It was during this visit that Cortez accidentally got intelligence of certain Spaniards, who were detained prisoners on the neighbouring continent. He overheard one of the Indians in the cazique's retinue repeat the word *Castilla*; and on ordering the interpreter to inquire into the Indian's meaning, was told that his men very much resembled certain prisoners kept in Yucatan, who said they were natives of a country of that name. On farther inquiry he found, that the captive Spaniards were in the hands of Indians of the first quality, who resided two days journey within the province. He instantly expressed his resolution of setting them at liberty, and was advised by the cazique to attempt it in the way of ransom, lest their masters should be induced to massacre them, from fear or resentment, if recourse was had to force; a caution which gave Cortez an high opinion of the good sense and sound policy of the Indian prince. Diego de Ordaz, who had now joined the fleet, was accordingly ordered with his vessel to the coast of Yucatan, charged with a letter from Cortez to the prisoners, and with presents for their ransom. These some Indians undertook to deliver, and to bring back an answer in eight days; but as they were not able to perform it so soon, Ordaz returned without executing his commission, imagining that he had been artfully cheated of the presents; and that either no Spaniards were detained in Yucatan, or that no attempt had been made to procure their release.

This disappointment was the source of real concern to Cortez; who, besides the pleasure of setting countrymen and fellow Christians at liberty, entertained great hopes from the services of the captives as interpreters, as it was probable they must have acquired the language of the country. Happily, however, before he quitted Cozumel, he was joined by the Indian messengers; who, though retarded by accidents, had very honourably discharged their engagements, and brought back with them the prisoner, whose name was Jerome de Aguilar. This man, according to his own account, had been eight years a prisoner among the Indians. Having been shipwrecked in his passage from Darien to Hispaniola, he escaped with twenty others in the long-boat, which was driven on the coast of Yucatan. All his companions except one, who married an Indian woman of rank, and conformed to the customs of the natives, among whom he chose to remain, had either perished from the hardships to which they were exposed, or been sacrificed to the gods of the country, and afterwards devoured by the Indians, he being spared by reason of his meagre appearance; and having acquired the Yucatan language, certain fortunate circumstances raised him, by degrees, to rank and consideration in the province*.

While the Indian messengers were employed in treating for the release of Aguilar, Cortez was not idle. He marched with his whole army to take a view

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. ii. c. 3.

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of the island, though with no hostile intention. On the contrary, he dissuaded his men from offering violence by the most effectual of all arguments, by representing to them the poverty of the people; which, as he very justly observed, could furnish no temptation to break through the regulations of discipline and the laws of hospitality. He told them, that there they were to stamp that impression of their characters, on which must depend, in a great measure, the success of all their future undertakings, as the reputation they acquired in Cozumel would soon be diffused over the continent; and he concluded with remarking, that the fame of their integrity, humanity, and generosity, would promote their interest, and extend their conquests more powerfully than the sword. He suffered them, however, to barter trinkets with the natives for gold and provisions; by which means the army was amply supplied with all the necessaries that the country afforded*.

March 4. Cortez, doubling Cape Cotoche, proceeded with his whole fleet to the river of Tabasco, in hopes of a reception as friendly as Grijalva had met with there, and of obtaining gold in the same abundance. He intended, however, only to make a short stay, his thoughts being wholly bent on proceeding to the capital of Mexico; the description of which, as given by Aguilar and the Indians, excited both his curiosity and ambition. Skirmishes in the remote provinces, he was sensible, could only serve to diminish the number of his troops, and weaken the force of that army which ought to be reserved entire for the grand enterprise. But as the soldiers were very earnest in their solicitations to go on shore, he resolved to gratify them at all events; and accordingly made an attempt to land, when a multitude of canoes, filled with men completely armed, and giving tokens of hostile intentions, were observed to line both sides of the river. Cortez advanced in close order in his boats, forbidding any of his men to fire till commanded. As soon as they came within an audible distance, Jerome de Aguilar found that he understood the language of the Indians, and acquainted the general, that their cries were menaces and declarations of war, unless he returned to the ships. Aguilar was now dispatched in one of the boats, with an offer of friendship; but he soon returned with intelligence, that the natives were obstinate in their resolution to defend the mouth of the river, and even refused to listen to his proposals†.

Cortez was still averse to war, for the reasons already assigned; but as he was afraid he might be lowered in the opinion of his soldiers, if he suffered the insolence of the Tabascans to pass unpunished, he made the necessary preparations for forcing his way. Willing, however, to accommodate matters, he sent Aguilar a second time with assurances, that he had nothing in view but mutual advantage. This declaration was answered by a signal to attack. Cortez had drawn up his fleet of boats in the form of a crescent, towards which

* De Solis, lib. i. c. 15.

† This hostile disposition is said to have been occasioned by a dread that the Spaniards, now more numerous than formerly, were returned to settle in the country. Herrera, dec. II. lib. II. c. 4.

The Tabascans advanced with the force of the current; and when within a proper distance, they discharged such a flight of arrows as greatly embarrassed the Spaniards to ward off: but having sustained the first shock, they returned it with a vigour which the Tabascans were unable to resist. Broken and astonished, they precipitately retired with their canoes, leaving a free passage for the boats. Many of them were so struck with terror by the smoke, fire, and explosion of the musketry, and the sudden death of their companions, that they threw themselves into the water, imagining the heavens were falling*.

In consequence of this advantage the boats put to shore, and the Spaniards began to land; but at a place so inconvenient, that the Tabascans recovered their spirits, and renewed the attack. The situation of Cortez was now very critical: at last, however, his valour and conduct triumphed over every obstacle. He animated his men alike by his exhortations and example, and without ceasing to maintain his fire, drew up one line, which supported the charge until others were formed, and in a condition to cover the debarkation of the whole army †. As soon as the landing was completed, he dispatched one of his officers with an hundred men, in order to reduce the town of Tabasco, while he himself fell upon the incredible multitude of his enemies, with such impetuosity and conduct, that they yielded to the shock, and fled towards the city, on which they perceived the Spaniards had designs. Cortez pursued them; and with such celerity, that he arrived at Tabasco as soon as the detachment, and instantly gave orders for an assault. "Let us follow the victory," cried he, "before these barbarians forget that we have taught them to fly, or our delay allow them leisure to collect their scattered spirits and reassemble their forces." In uttering these words, he drew his sword, and led the attack. The town was fortified with long stakes, fixed deep in the ground, in the manner of palisades, and so joined, that the Tabascans had room to discharge their arrows at certain openings. It had no outworks; but at the joining of the circle, the extremity of one line covered the opening in the other, and composed a narrow serpentine street, resembling a spiral line, defended by little wooden towers at the entrances. This was an extremely commodious defence against such arms as were used by the Americans; and though not proof against artillery, and the improvements in the military art made by the European nations, it greatly embarrassed the Spaniards. But nothing could resist the ardour of Cortez: he gained the foot of the palisades under a cloud of arrows that darkened the sky, and the musketeers kept up so perpetual a fire through the openings, that the Tabascans, deserting their posts, gave the Spaniards an opportunity of cutting a passage in the wooden ramparts, and of forcing their way to the very heart of the town. There the combat was renewed; but, after a short resistance, the Tabascans were defeated and dispersed, and their capital was yielded as the reward of the conquerors ‡. In this action fourteen Spaniards were wounded, but none slain. The slaughter of the natives was considerable, and the number of their wounded very great. Cortez, however, found

† De Solis, lib. i. c. 17.

‡ Id. *ibid.*

‡ De Solis, lib. i. c. 18.

no booty in Tabasco, except provisions for his troops, the inhabitants having removed their families and most valuable effects before the commencement of the assault.

The day being now far advanced, the Spaniards took up their quarters during the night in three temples, situated near that part of the town where they had last engaged; and Cortez kept up as strict a watch as if the Tabascans had been experienced veterans, commanded by an able general, who could take advantage of the slightest opportunity. Next morning the country seemed entirely deserted: not a human figure was to be seen. The woods were searched, and found to be equally solitary; yet Cortez, apprehensive of some stratagem, continued his former caution. The very silence, that reigned so universally, served to rouse his suspicions; which were further confirmed by the desertion of Melichor, the Indian, whom he had carried with him to serve as an interpreter. In order to relieve himself from this uncertainty, he detached two of his officers, with an hundred men each, to examine the country more narrowly. Before they had made much progress, they were surrounded by a multitude of the natives, and with difficulty made their way back to the main body. On examining some prisoners taken upon this occasion, it was discovered that the Tabascans founded their obstinacy upon the assurances of the deserter Melichor, that the Spaniards were but a handful; that they were not immortal; and that their fire-arms, so terrible in appearance, were less destructive than might be imagined. The captives also related, that the caziques of the adjacent provinces were summoned to the assistance of the lord of Tabasco, and that next day a very powerful army, composed of their united forces, was to take the field *.

On receiving this intelligence Cortez called a council of his principal officers, and laid before them the difficulties in which they were engaged, the preparations of the Indians to destroy them, and the inequality of their own numbers. He next expatiated on the glory of overcoming such a multitude of enemies; the experience and valour of the Spaniards; the timidity and simplicity of the Tabascans: but he more especially insisted upon the bad consequences which would result from discovering any symptoms of fear on the present occasion, as the report of their disgrace, and the triumph of the barbarians, might reach Mexico, which they must hope to conquer, more by the reputation of invincible valour, than by force of arms. In his opinion, therefore, they ought either to abandon all thoughts of the enterprise against New Spain, or proceed no farther till they had humbled the Tabascans. These, however, he observed, were only his own sentiments, which he would willingly submit to the judgment of the council.

The resolution of the council of war was entirely conformable to the general's opinion; and Cortez, thus supported in his measures, made preparations for facing the enemy next morning. The wounded were ordered on board, the horses landed, the artillery got in readiness, and such spirits were infused into the

* Ibid. lib. i. c. 19.

troops, as prefaged a fortunate issue to the expected engagement. Committing the infantry to the care of Diego de Ordaz, Cortez marched, as soon as it was light, with his few cavalry in the front, accompanied by the artillery, to which they served as a guard: and in this order he advanced to the place where, according to the information of the prisoners, the enemy's forces were to assemble. Not perceiving there a single human figure, he proceeded a mile farther, to a place called Cinthla; whence he discovered, advancing towards him, the most numerous army he had ever beheld, and stretching so far from right to left, to use the pompous language of the Spanish historians, that the eye could not take in both extremities. But without any hyperbole, the number of the Indians was incredibly great, not less than forty thousand; nor were they so contemptibly armed, as to free the Spaniards from those disquieting apprehensions which are naturally excited by the appearance of superior force*. Their weapons were bows and arrows; the bowstrings made of the tendons of beasts or twisted thongs of deer-skin, and their arrows armed with bones ground sharp, or pointed with fish bones, the Americans being all unacquainted with the use of iron. They used also long darts, which they managed according to the occasion, either as pikes or javelins. Their swords, made of wood, and edged with flint, were so long and heavy, that they were wielded by both hands. Some of them had large clubs armed with flint, and great numbers used slings, which they managed with much dexterity, throwing stones with amazing strength and skill. Persons of distinction wore quilted cotton armour, and breast-plates and shields of wood or tortoise shell, adorned with plates of gold or copper. The troops of every province were led by their proper cazique; but although there was a kind of subordination established, it was generally laid aside in battle, every man relying for success upon the strength of his own arm, his own valour and address.

Such was the army that rushed, like an inundation, upon the Spaniards, and

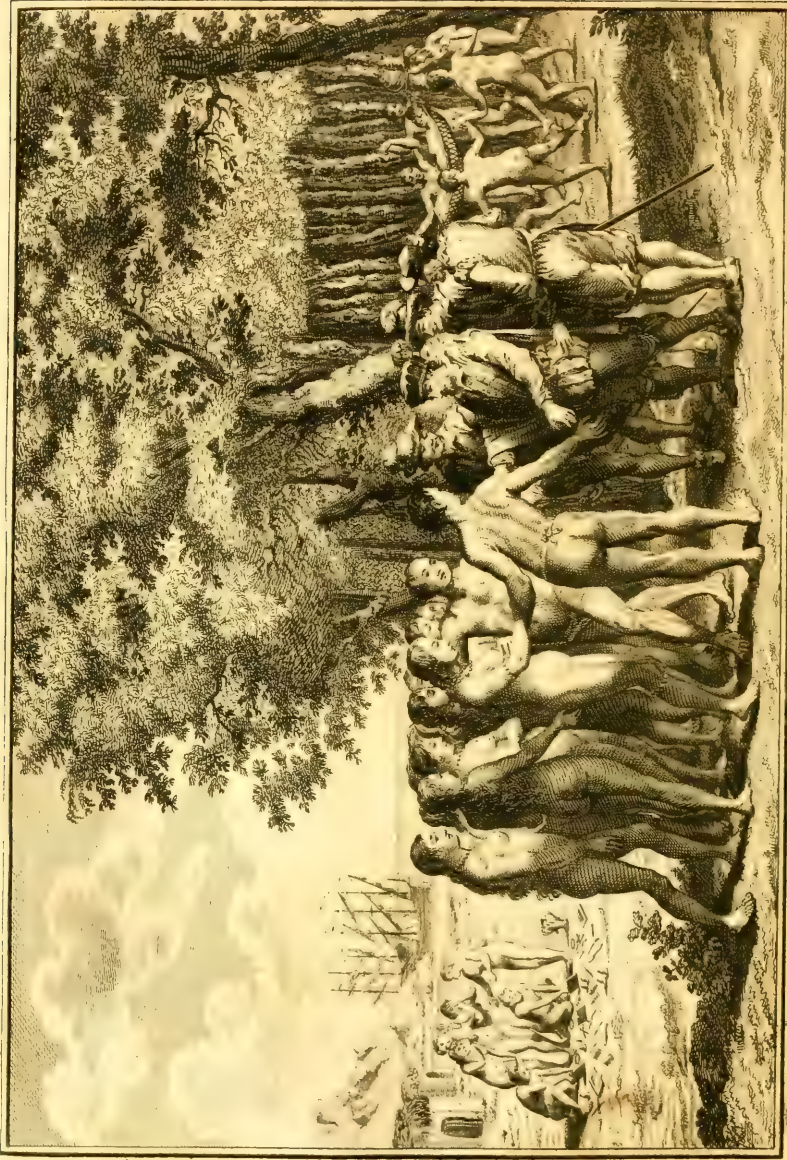
* Dr. Robertson has omitted the particulars of almost all the engagements between the Spaniards and Americans, from a persuasion that there was "no equality of danger," and consequently that "no power of words could render the recital interesting." But if we consider the disproportionate number of the Spaniards, and the inconsiderable few that were armed with muskets; that thirty-two only had cross bows, and the rest merely swords and spears, we shall find reason to believe, that the learned historian took his idea of the inequality of danger, rather from the inequality of the numbers killed, as he seems to intimate, than from a comparison of the weapons of the two parties. This, however, is known to be a very unfair method of computing danger; the principal slaughter, before the regular use of fire-arms, being always committed in the pursuit, and the Spaniards were generally here victorious. By the same way of judging the doctor might suppose the danger so unequal as to render the particulars of the battle of Gressly uninteresting, because twelve hundred French knights, and fourteen hundred gentlemen were killed in it, and only one English esquire, and three knights; a loss more disproportionate, should we even take in the comparative numbers of the common men slain, than that of the Spaniards in their famous battle with the Tabascans, to the particulars of which this note is a prelude. An example of a like kind occurs in the history of Scotland. Edward Baliol, with two thousand five hundred Englishmen, defeated an army of near forty thousand Scots, and killed between twelve and thirteen thousand of them, with the loss of only thirty lives. But he would be accounted a madman, who should hence conclude, that the danger of Baliol and his party was not sufficient to create anxiety.

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seemed to cover the whole face of the country. The attack began upon the foot, while Cortez was taking post on an eminence, whence his fifteen horse and the artillery could do most execution. The Tabascans first shot their arrows, and then closed in with so much impetuosity, that the Spaniards not being able to annoy them with their fire-arms and cross bows, had recourse to their swords and spears; while the cannon, from the higher ground, made dreadful slaughter of the enemy, destroying whole companies as they heedlessly pushed on in crowds. Yet were they so obstinate, that, instead of retreating, they threw handfuls of dust into the air to conceal their slain, and advanced with redoubled fury; insomuch that Diego de Ordaz, who commanded the infantry, and behaved with great gallantry, must have yielded to the infinite superiority of numbers, had not Cortez seasonably fallen upon the rear of the Tabascans with his cavalry, breaking through the thickest ranks, flashing with his sword, and trampling under the feet of his horses those half-naked wretches, who were seized with a sudden panic on the first appearance of so extraordinary an animal. Observing the disorder and terror of the enemy, Ordaz collected all his strength, and pressed on with so much vigour, that this vast multitude fluctuated, like the rolling of the sea, from the van to the rear, and at last broke and dispersed, leaving eight hundred slain upon the field, and many wounded, whom they had not leisure to carry off. Cortez had two soldiers killed, and seventy wounded. He could have taken more prisoners than he thought proper to seize; being content with a few to set on foot a negociation of peace, and demonstrate to the Tabascans, that the Spaniards harboured no hostile designs against them*. The defeat of such a vast army, by an handful of men, justly raised the reputation of Cortez, and appeared so wonderful to the Spanish writers of those days, that they thought a miracle necessary to gain it belief; and therefore relate that St. James, the guardian of Spain, fought at the head of their countrymen, and by his prowess gave a fortunate turn to the battle†.

The day after this victory Cortez ordered the prisoners, among whom were some persons of distinction, to be brought before him. They discovered in their faces symptoms of the strongest fear, imagining they were to be sacrificed to the gods of the strangers, agreeably to the inhuman practice of their own country: how great then was their surprise to find themselves treated with the utmost respect, and set at liberty with presents, as if they had performed some signal service! — Cortez told them, that he knew how to forgive as well as to conquer: and

* De Solís, lib. i. c. 19. † Gomara is the first who mentions this apparition of St. James, which B. Diaz del Castillo treats with that ludicrous contempt it deserves. "It may be," says that respectable veteran, (who was present in the engagement, and seems unwilling to be robbed of his share of the honour by St. James) "that the person whom Gomara mentions as having appeared on a dappled grey horse, was the glorious apostle Signor St. Jago, or Signor St. Pedro; and that I, as being a sinner, was not worthy to see him. This I know, that I saw Francisco de Morla on such a horse, but as an unworthy transgressor did not deserve to see any of the holy apostles. It may have been the will of God, that it was so as Gomara relates; but until I read his chronicle, I never heard among any of the conquerors that such a thing had happened." Verd. Hist. c. 34.



MARINA and others. Indian Girls, presented to CORTES, & his companions at, Acolman.

his generosity on this occasion was soon perceived to be true policy. A few hours after the prisoners had been released, crowds of Indians came to the Spanish quarters, laden with provisions of all kinds; and next morning an embassy, from the cazique of Tabasco, arrived with proposals of peace. But Cortez refused to give the deputies audience, being informed by Aguilar that they were persons of inferior condition; whereas it was customary with the Indians to intrust men of eminence with such commissions: he therefore bid the interpreter acquaint them, that if their cazique was desirous of his friendship he must solicit it with more respect and decency.

It appeared in the sequel that Cortez was right in his judgment: strangers commonly estimate men in proportion to the value which they set on themselves: the cazique apologized for his error, and repaired it by sending thirty persons of better quality, richly attired, and followed by a numerous train, bearing presents of various kinds, who solicited an audience with great formality. Their request was granted, and Cortez, attended by his principal officers, received them with much state and solemnity. The ambassadors advanced with profound submission; and having perfumed the Spaniards with incense of gum anime, delivered their instructions: they expressed their concern for the late hostilities, and the cazique's warm regard for Cortez, entreating that peace might be granted upon such terms as the Spanish general should think proper. After representing to them the imprudence of the cazique's conduct, the vanity of all attempts to oppose the Spaniards by force of arms, and the mutual benefit that would result from a friendly intercourse, Cortez dismissed the embassy with assurances of his sincere desire to cultivate the esteem of the Tabascans, and some presents of European toys, with which the ambassadors were highly pleased.

The day following the cazique in person, attended by a numerous train, honoured the Spaniards with a visit. On his entrance, he made Cortez a present of several pieces of fine cotton cloth, many beautifully variegated plumes, and some plates of gold. Reciprocal compliments, and protestations of friendship were exchanged, by means of the interpreter Aguilar; and the Indian prince, on taking leave, gave Cortez a striking proof of his sincerity, by ordering all his subjects to return with their families to Tabasco, and use their utmost endeavours to prove serviceable to the strangers. As a farther mark of his regard, he sent Cortez a present of twenty female slaves, skilled in dressing meat, and baking bread of Indian wheat. Among these was one of superior beauty and talents, who engaged the general's affections, and became famous under the name of Donna Marina*.

From the river Tabasco, Cortez continued his course to the westward, keeping as near the shore as possible, in order to observe the country; but could discover no proper place for landing, till he arrived in the gulph of St Juan de Ulua. As he entered the bay, two large canoes full of people, approached the

April 2.

* De Solis, lib. i. c. 20. Herrera, dec. II. lib. ii. c. 4.

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fleet. In each appeared to be a person of distinction, who made signals of peace and amity. Cortez invited them on board his ship : they came without fear or distrust, and addressed him in a most respectful manner, but in a language unknown to Aguilar. Fortunately, however, Donna Marina, who was present at this interview, understood them, and told the interpreter, in the Yucatan dialect, that they spoke the Mexican tongue. Having been born in one of the provinces of that empire, and carried off captive by an hostile party, she fell, after a variety of adventures, into the hands of the Tabascans, whose language she had acquired without losing her own *.

Tedious and troublesome as it was for Cortez to converse by the intervention of two interpreters, he was so happy at being released from his distressing embarrassment, and in discovering any method of intercourse with the people of a country where all his hopes and fears centered, that he considered it as a visible interposition of Heaven in his favour. By means of his interpreters he learned, that the two persons whom he had received on board of his ship were deputies from Pilpatoe and Teutile ; the first governor of that province, under a great monarch called Montezuma, the second captain-general of his forces there ; that they were sent to inquire, what were the designs of the commander of that fleet in coming upon their coast, and to offer him what assistance might be necessary in order to enable him to continue his voyage. Cortez replied, that he came, in a friendly manner, to treat of affairs of the utmost importance to their sovereign and his empire ; and desired an interview with the governor and general, to whom he would make his purpose more fully known. Without waiting for an answer, he landed his forces next morning ; and having chosen proper ground, began to fortify a camp, in case of any sudden attack. Branches were cut for making entrenchments, and for erecting huts, in order to shade the troops from the intense heat of the sun-beams, while the artillery was so disposed as to command the surrounding country.

In these operations the Spaniards were assisted by the natives ; though not from any motives of kindness or generosity, as supposed by Dr. Robertson †, but from the maxims of that timid and selfish policy, which seeks to avert danger by civilities or benefits, instead of relying for protection on the power of defence. Teutile was at the head of a considerable army, which had been employed in establishing the emperor's authority in some parts of this province lately conquered : but it was inferior to that which the Spaniards had defeated at Tabasco : the slaughter of the Tabascans had been occasioned by their obstinacy ; and as the news of Cortez's victory and clemency arrived here before him, orders were issued to the inhabitants, by the governor and general, to supply the strangers with provisions, and a detachment was sent from the army to aid them in erecting their temporary dwellings ‡. The same timid policy, accompanied with a hope that the Spaniards did not mean to reside in the country, also in-

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 2. De Solis, lib. i. c. 21.
book v.

† De Solis, lib. i. c. 21.

‡ Hist. Amer.

fects the mind of Montezuma, and proved, as we shall have occasion to see, the source of all his misfortunes.

The day following Pilpatoe and Teutile, with a numerous train of attendants, entered the Spanish camp ; where they were received with equal state by Cortez, in the midst of his officers and soldiers. As soon as the first compliments were exchanged, he desired the interpreters to acquaint them, that, before he disclosed the motives of his voyage, he must comply with the duties of his religion, and recommend to the God of all gods the success of his commission. The governor and general were now conducted to a place, where an altar and cross, intended for the purposes of a chapel, had been erected. Mass was there celebrated to the astonishment of the Mexicans, who listened and gazed with an air of devotion and wonder. When divine service was over, Pilpatoe and Teutile were conducted to the general's quarters, and entertained with all the pomp and ceremony of which his circumstances would admit. The repast being ended, Cortez informed them, That he came as ambassador from Don Carlos of Austria, king of Spain, the greatest monarch of the East *, concerning matters of such moment, not only to the welfare of Montezuma, but also to the happiness of all his subjects, that he could communicate his instructions only to the emperor in person ; and therefore required them to conduct him immediately to the seat of the court, where he hoped to be admitted into the royal presence, and to be received with that civility and respect due to the dignity and the generous intentions of the king his master.

The Mexican officers could not hide their uneasiness at this request, which they knew must be disagreeable to their sovereign, and which they feared might conceal some dangerous designs against his person and throne. But though determined not to comply with the demand of Cortez, they were anxious to conciliate his good will ; and therefore ordered a present, which they had prepared, to be brought in, before they attempted to dissuade him from his purpose. Immediately twenty or thirty of the natives appeared laden with choice provisions, fine cotton cloth, rich plumes of various colours, and a large box, in which were several pieces of gold plate curiously wrought. These being delivered, Pilpatoe and Teutile ventured to reply, That the small present now offered was made by two slaves of the great Montezuma, who had given orders to entertain, with the utmost civility, such strangers as might appear upon his coasts ; adding, however, that Cortez must think of pursuing his voyage, nor farther urge a request too presumptuous to be mentioned to the august monarch whom it concerned, and to approach whose presence, without leave, was death.

The Spaniards were so much engaged in examining the particular articles of the present, which produced an effect very different from what was intended,

* Charles V. emperor of Germany, king of Spain, sovereign of the Low Countries, &c. certainly the greatest monarch in Europe, if not in the whole ancient continent. He had succeeded to the Spanish crown in 1511, in consequence of the death of his grandfather Ferdinand, and was elected emperor in 1519.

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that the pompous answer of the Mexican officers was little heeded, and less regarded. Impatient and eager to become master of a country which yielded such valuable productions, Cortez, in a haughty and determined tone, renewed his demand of a personal audience of Montezuma. "It is your business," added he, "instead of opposing so reasonable a request, at least to acquaint your sovereign of my arrival, and what I claim as the representative of a powerful and magnanimous prince: how to act afterwards is mine." Overawed by so bold a speech, Pilpatoe and Teutile became more compliant, requesting Cortez not to move from his present quarters, till the return of a courier from the emperor*.

During this interview some painters, in the train of the Mexican chiefs, were diligently employed in delineating upon white cotton cloths, prepared for the purpose, representations of the ships, soldiers, arms, artillery, and whatever else attracted their notice, as singular. Teutile had ordered these paintings to be executed for the emperor's better information. To render them more intelligible, and to point out particulars, certain marks were placed over certain figures, to explain their meaning; whence it may be inferred, that, though the Mexicans could not convey all their ideas without the images of material things, yet they were not wholly unacquainted with the use of arbitrary symbols†.

When Cortez observed the Mexican artists at work, and was informed that their labours were intended for the use of Montezuma, he resolved to exhibit such a spectacle, as would afford them an opportunity of rendering the pictures still more animated and interesting, and impress both them and their sovereign with awful ideas of the prowess and arms of the Spaniards. For this purpose, he mounted his horse along with his officers; the trumpets sounded the alarm; the troops, in a moment, formed in order of battle, and displayed, in a variety of martial exercises, the effect of their different weapons, their own address, and the strength and agility of the horses. The Mexicans beheld, with equal pleasure and surprise, the regular evolutions of the infantry, and the rapid and impetuous movements of the cavalry; they could even stand the discharge of the small arms, though not without evident signs of trepidation; but at the explosion of the cannon many fled with rapidity, some fell to the ground with fear and astonishment, and all were so much alarmed and amazed, that Cortez found it difficult to recompose their spirits. The painters had now fresh subjects on which to exercise their genius, and fell again to work, inventing new figures and characters to represent the extraordinary things they had seen, and supply what was wanting in their former descriptions‡.

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 1.

† This subject shall be more fully explained, when we come to consider the arts of the ancient Mexicans.

‡ Castillo is extremely minute in his description of these historical paintings. He affirms, but is accused of exaggeration by De Solis, that all the different objects in the Spanish camp were distinguished in landscapes ingeniously disposed, and that all the portraits of the principal officers strikingly resembled the originals; that the horses were painted with great exactness and strength of colouring; that the artillery was represented by fire and smoke, and even some idea of the explosion conveyed by the similitude of lightning, and the undulating tremulous appearance of the surrounding objects. Verd. Hist. c. 39.

These painted advices, containing not only a representation of whatever was singular in the Spanish camp, but an account of every thing that had passed since the arrival of the strangers, were immediately transmitted to Montezuma, together with some European curiosities from Cortez, which though of no great value, he thought might be acceptable by reason of their novelty: and though the capital, where the emperor resided, was upwards of one hundred and eighty miles from St. Juan de Ulua, and though the Mexicans had no domestic animals to accelerate the speed of man, Cortez's presents were delivered, and an answer to his request received in seven days. This extraordinary dispatch was accomplished by means of a refinement in police, unknown at that time in Europe. The Mexican emperors, in order to obtain early information from all the corners of their extensive empire, had couriers posted at proper stations along the principal roads; and as these were trained to agility by a regular education, and relieved each other at moderate distances, they conveyed intelligence with surprising celerity*.

But though this regulation sufficiently accounts for the quick return of Montezuma's answer, we are still at a loss how to reconcile to probability the arrival of a magnificent present at the same time, said to have been conveyed with equal speed, and which Pilpatoe and Teutile delivered to Cortez, before they ventured to make known the determination of their master. It was carried on the shoulders of an hundred Indians, (who may be supposed to have been relieved, as the couriers were, at certain distances) and consisted of various kinds of cotton cloth, so finely manufactured as to rival silk in the delicacy of its texture; pictures of animals, plants, and other natural objects, formed with feathers of different colours, disposed and mingled with so much taste and skill, as to emulate the works of the pencil in truth and beauty of imitation, without the aid of artificial tints; bows, arrows, targets, and other military weapons of curious materials and workmanship; two large plates of a circular form, the one of massive gold, curiously embossed, representing the sun, the other of silver, an emblem of the moon; bracelets, collars, rings, and other ornaments of gold; boxes filled with pearls and precious stones, and grains of virgin gold, as found in the mines or rivers†.

These rich materials were placed upon mats spread on the ground, in such order as to be seen to the greatest advantage, and far exceeded any idea that the Spaniards had hitherto formed of the wealth of the Mexican empire‡. When Pilpatoe and

and

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 2.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 2. Castillo, c. 39.

De Solis, lib. ii. c. 2.

‡ In order to avoid the apparent improbability, that this

present was conveyed with the same celerity that the couriers, who carried Montezuma's answer, performed their journey, Dr. Robertson supposes, that it "had been prepared for Grijalva, when he touched at the same place some months before." But unfortunately for the Doctor, (who on this occasion abandons his two chief guides, Castillo and Herrera, to follow a conjecture of Go nara) he does not give us the smallest hint in the former part of his narration, that Grijalva landed on the continent at St. Juan de Ulua; nor does any Spanish writer represent his appearance on that coast as alarming to the inhabitants, with whom he trafficked in an amicable manner: it is

therefore

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and Teutile observed the satisfaction of Cortez and his companions, they informed the general, That the great emperor Montezuma sent him those things in return for his present, and as expressions of his friendship for the monarch of the East; but that he did not think it proper, nor was it indeed possible at that time, such was the posture of affairs, to grant his request of passing to the court of Mexico. This refusal the Mexican officers endeavoured to palliate by many specious arguments; founded on the badness of the roads, the savage nations that would take up arms and obstruct his journey, and the distracted state of the empire, which made it inconvenient for the emperor to receive him. But Cortez, who was not to be diverted from his purpose by such evasions, after expressing his sense of the munificence of Montezuma, and his unwillingness to offend him, replied in a tone more resolute than formerly, That he could not, without dishonour, return to his master, until he had been admitted into the presence of the prince whom he was appointed to visit in his name; and therefore must insist on his first demand, with that earnestness due to the reputation of a crown jealous of its honour, and revered by the greatest sovereigns in the world. Astonished at seeing any man dare to oppose that will, which they had been accustomed to consider as supreme and irresistible, yet afraid of precipitating their country into an open war with such formidable enemies, Pilpatoe and Teutile offered to consult Montezuma a second time, and Cortez dismissed them with another present of European manufactures more considerable than the former; acquainting them, at the same time, that he would expect the emperor's answer without stirring from his present station, and should be sorry if any unnecessary delay obliged him to remove nearer the capital, for the greater conveniency of soliciting his request*.

After the Mexican officers retired, the Spaniards found leisure to examine Montezuma's present with more deliberation and accuracy: all admired its magnificence, but the inferences drawn from it, in regard to their future conduct, were very different. Some of them, estimating the power of Montezuma, by this proof of his wealth, drew unfavourable conclusions concerning the event of the expedition, affirming that it would be an act of the wildest frenzy to at-

therefore less improbable to suppose, that an hundred chosen men, alternately relieving each other, or being relieved by a fresh company, should be able to travel with a light burden, at the command of a despotic monarch, three hundred and sixty miles in seven days, than that a present of such magnificence as exceeded even the romantic ideas of the Spaniards concerning the wealth of the Mexican empire, should be sent by Montezuma to a roving adventurer on his coasts, who had never recognized his dignity, or seemed formidable to his power.

According to Castillo, the silver plate representing the moon, was alone equal in value to twenty thousand pesos, near five thousand pounds sterling. Verd. Hist. c. 39. The gold emblem of the sun was double the weight of this; and therefore must have been immensely valuable, independent of the workmanship. Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 2.—The author of this work has hitherto uniformly, he thinks, used the word *peso* in speaking of the sums acquired by the Spaniards in the New World; but the reader is desired to observe, lest any other term should have escaped him, or may afterwards occur, that the Spanish coins, *peso*, *castellano*, and *piece of eight*, are each of the same value; namely, about 4s. 6d. of our money.

* Castillo, c. 39. Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 2. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 2.

tack so great a monarch with a handful of men, in want of provisions, unsupported by any ally, and already enfeebled by the diseases of a sultry climate; while others, of a more ardent disposition, despising danger or hardships, when so great a prize was in view, anticipated in imagination the immense riches which they should acquire by the conquest of a country, whose treasures appeared to be inexhaustible, and the pillage of a capital where such prodigious wealth centered. Cortez secretly applauded the advocates for bold measures, but without declaring his own opinion, though his resolution was already formed; and in order to divert the attention of his soldiers from too minute an inquiry into his conduct, he determined to keep them fully employed. For this purpose he dispatched Francisco de Montejo with two vessels, and some of the most turbulent spirits, to run along the coast, with which he was acquainted, in search of a more commodious harbour for the fleet, and a better station for the camp; the ships being greatly exposed to the north winds, and the vigour of the soldiers wasted by the intense heat of the sun-beams, reflected in a sandy and gravelly soil. The rest of the army he kept constantly occupied, either in military exercises, or in preparing such materials as he imagined might prove useful in facilitating the progress of his designs *.

Meanwhile the court of Mexico was thrown into the utmost confusion and perplexity by the repeated solicitations of the Spanish general, and the firmness with which he insisted on an interview with the emperor. This firmness should naturally have brought the negotiation between Cortez and Montezuma to a speedy conclusion: the Mexican monarch should either have received him with the confidence of a friend, or have opposed him openly, and resolutely as an enemy. He had no other choice. But several circumstances conspired to stagger the resolution of Montezuma, and incline him, on this occasion, to temporize, and deliberate, when he ought to have acted or decided. The account which the painted dispatches gave of the fire-arms, artillery, and horses of the Spaniards, filled that prince with astonishment and terror. All his ministers and courtiers were summoned to attend in solemn consultation, and public sacrifices were offered in the temples, in order to avert the impending danger. The people caught the alarm, and universal consternation rapidly spread through the whole empire. Ignorant men labouring under the apprehensions of fear consider every unusual appearance in the heavens, in the air, or on the earth, as so many preages of their ruin. In every country the ministers of superstition have taken advantage of these imaginary horrors; and on this basis they have sometimes erected a power, to which every other was subordinate. The Mexicans were equally ignorant and superstitious, and construed into frightful omens certain natural phenomena, which are said to have appeared about this time, and occasioned a general despondency. One of these was a comet of extraordinary lustre, in the shape of a pyramid, which began to be visible about midnight, and advancing slowly towards the south, vanished at the approach of morning; another was a

* Castillo, c. 40. Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 2. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 2.

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kind of meteor or exhalation, which rose in the west at noon, and being converted into the figure of a fiery serpent with three heads, ran rapidly towards the east, until it was lost in the clouds. One of the Mexican temples caught fire, by what means could never be discovered, and was entirely consumed, in spite of every attempt to extinguish the flame. The very stones were supposed to burn, and liquify in a manner deemed altogether supernatural. The great lake of Mexico overflowed its banks without any visible cause, with a kind of bubbling resembling boiling water; yet no uncommon heat was perceived. Many persons affirmed, that they heard lamentable voices in the air, predicting the overthrow of the monarchy; and the priests cherished the superstitious fear of the people, by making the idols utter such oracles as best suited their purposes*.

These pretended predictions and extraordinary appearances, which at most only happened accidentally to coincide with the landing of Cortez, were supposed to be connected with that event in the nature and order of things; and the imaginations of the Mexicans being strongly affected by the first sight of a new race of men, their credulity and superstition instantly represented the Spaniards, as the instruments destined to bring about that fatal revolution suggested by their fears. The Mexican council therefore, on the arrival of the second message from Cortez, gave up all for lost, and regarded the empire, though the most powerful in America, as already on the verge of ruin. Montezuma however, though labouring under the same apprehensions, still retained some degree of courage, and in a transport of rage natural to a haughty prince, unaccustomed to meet with any opposition to his will, threatened to sacrifice those presumptuous strangers to his gods. But, on cooler reflection, his courage sunk; and instead of carrying his menaces into execution, he again assembled his ministers, to consult and deliberate on the most prudent and effectual measures for expelling such troublesome intruders. They deliberated, debated, and consulted, but always broke up with divided sentiments. Some of them were for opposing the Spaniards by force of arms, interpreting the omens as so many warnings to rouse them to a vigorous defence, and avert the threatening danger; while others, more timid, insisted on the valour of the strangers, the force of their weapons, the irresistible strength of their furious animals, and the terror of their lightning, of which the Tabascans had fatal experience.

Montezuma, on mature deliberation, determined to steer a middle course between the two opinions, being unwilling either to proceed to hostilities against the Spaniards, or to manifest his own perturbation, by admitting their general to his presence. He therefore sent Cortez another present, and at the same time commanded him immediately to quit his dominions, hoping by these means

* All these supposed prodigies and prophecies, are uniformly ascribed, by the Spanish historians, to the interposition of Heaven in favour of their countrymen. Even de Solís gives into this flattering error. "Horrible and wonderful portents," says he, "which God either commanded, decreed, or permitted, in order to crush the spirit of that fierce people, and render their overthrow less difficult to the Spaniards." *Hist. de las Conq. de Mexico*, lib. ii.

either to bribe or terrify him into obedience; but resolving, if neither threats nor presents had the desired effect, to raise a powerful army, and chase the obstinate invaders to their ships, or overwhelm them by means of numbers *. Nor would it have been possible for the Spaniards, notwithstanding their superior arms and discipline, to have withstood the forces that Montezuma could suddenly have assembled, had he attacked them while encamped on the barren and unhealthy coast of St. Juan de Ulua, destitute of provisions, and unsupported by any ally. They must either have taken refuge in their ships, and abandoned the enterprise, or have perished in such an unequal contest.

The Mexican empire was, at this period, in the zenith of its glory; and though, according to tradition, it had subsisted only one hundred and thirty years, it extended in length, from east to west, above five hundred leagues, and near two hundred in breadth, from north to south, comprehending under its dominion some of the most populous and wealthy provinces in the New World. The people were warlike and enterprising: the authority of the sovereign was unlimited; his revenues were considerable; and the prince upon the throne was one of the most martial and politic who had ever swayed the Mexican sceptre. He was also more haughty, more violent, and more impatient of controul, than any of his predecessors: his subjects looked up to him with awe, and his enemies with terror; both being impressed with the most affecting ideas of his power and capacity †. But though the talents of Montezuma might have proved sufficient to maintain that despotic dominion which he had established, they were inadequate to the critical situation in which he now found himself. He was not politician enough to conceive it possible for any person uniformly to profess friendship and intend war; and being desirous to get rid of his new guests, yet afraid to use violence against a people so formidable, he afforded the Spanish general leisure to perfect his schemes, and all his own subjects and tributaries, many of whom were secretly disaffected, an opportunity of observing his timidity, in his profuse generosity to the strangers.

While Cortez was endeavouring to acquire some knowledge of the character of this prince, and of the state of his empire, and to inspire the Spaniards with the same great hopes of which his own heart assured him, Montejo returned from his coasting voyage, having discovered a town called Quibablan, about thirty-six miles to the northward, situated in a fertile soil, with a good harbour, and every other conveniency wanted for the fleet or army. Thither Cortez was proposing to remove: but before he had come to any resolution, Teutile arrived with Montezuma's answer, or rather his command to quit the Mexican dominions. It was delivered in terms so harsh and disagreeable, that not the valuable present which accompanied it was sufficient to prevent the Castilian pride from being hurt; and when Cortez, instead of complying, renewed his request of an audience, Teutile started up hastily, and told him with much emotion, That hitherto the great Montezuma, having considered him as a

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 4.

† De Solis, lib. ii. c. 3.

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guest, had shewn him all the civilities required by the sacred laws of hospitality, but that he must lay the fault upon his own obstinacy, if he found himself henceforth treated as an enemy. This speech being finished, the Mexican turned his back abruptly, and left the Spanish camp with looks and gestures strongly expressive of his resentment and surmise *.

Cortez, though somewhat uneasy at these symptoms of more vigorous measures, or more violent councils, had sufficient presence of mind to turn round to his officers with a smile, and say, "We shall see where this challenge will end. Threats are commonly the effects of fear. We have already had a specimen of the Mexican prowess." And while they were collecting the different articles of Montezuma's present, he added, "These riches may be regarded as proofs, rather of the emperor's weakness, than of his generosity; but it is our business to guard against all contingencies." He accordingly ordered the guards to be doubled that night, and kept himself till morning in a posture of defence †.

As soon as day began to appear, it was perceived, that all the Mexicans had withdrawn themselves. Even those employed in supplying the camp with provisions kept away: not a man was to be seen in all the surrounding country. While Cortez was ruminating on this alarming prospect of want and approaching hostilities, five Indians were introduced to him by Bernal Diaz del Castillo; who, while standing sentinel with another soldier, observed them advancing towards one of the avenues of the camp, and thinking their number too small to give any disquieting apprehensions to the army, suffered them to draw near. On their approach, they gave him to understand by signs, that they came with a friendly message to the general, to whom they were immediately conducted. Cortez received them with much civility; and learned by his interpreters, though with some difficulty, by reason of the variation of their dialect from the Mexican, that they were sent by the lord of Zempoalla, a considerable town at no great distance, to request the alliance of those brave men, whose gallant actions in the province of Tabasco had reached his ears ‡.

The Spanish general accepted the proffered alliance with pleasure, considering it as a particular mark of divine favour, that this embassy should arrive at the very time when the Mexicans had withdrawn themselves, and when he was at a loss what course to take. His satisfaction was increased when he understood, that Zempoalla lay in the road to that commodious station which Montejo had discovered on the coast, and whither he now proposed to remove his quarters. But how great was his joy, when he discovered, in consequence of the questions which

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 5.

† Id. *ibid.*

‡ The Zempoallan ambassadors are here introduced on the authority of Herrera, who is rigidly exact in the chronological arrangement of events. De Solis introduces them later, and Dr. Robertson later still; and both reason ingeniously on their appearance. But the author of this work is of opinion, that the natural order of every incident immediately connected with the main story, if its consequences are properly deduced, is preferable to any mechanical disposition; which is more suited to the historic *fable*, where interest and probability are the only objects, than to the detail of historical *facts*.

he put to the ambassadors, that the cazique of Zempoalla, though subject to the Mexican empire, and several other tributary princes in his neighbourhood, were impatient of the yoke, and desired nothing so much as an opportunity of cementing a powerful league against Montezuma, whose tyranny was become altogether insupportable!—A ray of light and hope broke in upon the mind of Cortez, and he discerned at one glance all the advantages of his situation. Sensible that the strength of a state depends upon union, and the power of a sovereign on the love of his people, he conjectured, that it could be no difficult matter to overturn the throne of a tyrant by the arms of his own subjects. Full of this great idea, which time and other fortunate circumstances enabled him to mature, he dismissed the Zempoallan ambassadors with warm expressions of friendship, and assurances that he would soon visit their master in person, and yield him what assistance he might require*.

But all the lofty schemes of Cortez were in danger of being overturned in a moment, by the disaffection of his followers. No sooner was his resolution of removing to Quiabisan known, which was considered as a certain indication of his design of settling in the country, than the adherents of Velasquez murmured loudly, and at length openly exclaimed against such a measure; insisting on the necessity of returning to Cuba, in order to refit the fleet, and augment the army, before any settlement was attempted, or any thought entertained of achieving the conquest of Mexico.

Cortez was too well acquainted with the sentiments of his troops to believe that this inclination would be general. He therefore suffered himself to be addressed by the malcontents. Diego de Ordaz, whose disaffection had long been known, spoke in the name of the rest, and told the general, with a military freedom, That the soldiers were much dissatisfied, and on the point of laying aside all obedience, having been informed that he designed to prosecute the enterprise, in the present feeble state of the armament, when neither the number of men, the condition of the ships, nor the reserve of provisions or warlike stores, bore any proportion to the difficulty of the undertaking: that they could not be blamed, as no man had so little value for his own life as to throw it prodigally away, in order to please the caprice of another; and that it was now full time to think of returning to Cuba, that Velasquez might take the necessary measures for accomplishing the purpose of the expedition, to which their slender, sickly, and ill-provided army was altogether inadequate.

Cortez listened to this speech without any appearance of emotion, and replied with a composed voice and countenance, That he was obliged to those who had taken the trouble to inform him of the discontent of the soldiers, as he had every reason to believe they were well satisfied, and desirous to proceed; that as yet none could complain of fortune, except those who were weary of being happy. A voyage favoured by the winds and seas, without one untoward accident, and successes such as their hearts could wish: the remarkable interposition

* Castillo, c. 41. Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 2. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 6.

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of Heaven at Cozumel, in furnishing them with an interpreter; a glorious, and almost bloodless victory at Tabasco, and such a profusion of riches in the country where they now resided!—were not, he coolly remarked, presages that ought to discourage needy adventurers. Nor would it be for their honour to give up the undertaking in which they were at present engaged, before they had seen the shadow of danger; especially when it was considered, that difficulties always appear greatest at a distance, and vanish, like the other phantoms of imagination, as we approach them. But if the soldiers were already so dejected, he artfully added, as not to be roused by the splendid prospect of riches and glory which lay before them, it would be folly to rely on their services: he should therefore deliberate, without loss of time, on returning to Cuba, as had been proposed; declaring that the backwardness of the private soldiers did not make such an impression upon him, as the surprise of finding their resolution to abandon the enterprise accompanied by the advice of his friends*.

Cortez carried his dissimulation yet farther. As soon as the malcontents retired, at once pleased and dissatisfied with their reception, he gave directions for publishing his return to Cuba; ordering the captains immediately to embark, with their respective companies, on board the vessels under their command, and be in readiness to sail early next morning. No sooner was this feigned resolution known, than the disappointed adventurers exclaimed loudly against it: the emissaries of Cortez mingled with them, and inflamed their resentment: the clamour became general; the whole camp seeming to be in mutiny, and eagerly demanding their general, whom they accused of deceiving them. Cortez was not long in making his appearance; when, with one voice, they expressed their astonishment and indignation at the orders which they had received. It was unworthy, they said, of the Castilian courage to be daunted at the first aspect of danger, and infamous to turn their backs before they had drawn their swords; declaring that, for their parts, they were determined not to abandon an enterprise which had hitherto proved so successful, and which tended so visibly to spread the knowledge of true religion, and to advance the glory and the interest of Spain; that they were ready, under his command, to encounter every difficulty, in quest of those treasures and establishments with which he had so long flattered them; but if he was seriously resolved to return to Cuba, and tamely relinquish all his hopes of wealth and fame to an envious rival, they would chuse another general to conduct them in the path of their wishes, while he, and such as were of the same pusillanimous opinion, might enjoy their ease, and suffer that contempt which they merited, for deserting so illustrious a project.

Delighted with this ardour, Cortez took no offence at the boldness with which the remonstrance was delivered. The sentiments were such as he himself had inspired, and the warmth of expression convinced him they were felt. Affecting however to be surprised at what he had heard, he declared that his orders to prepare for returning to Cuba, had been issued from a persuasion that his troops

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 5.

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were so disposed; that nothing could be more opposite to his own inclination; and deference to what he had been told (by those who were principally interested in the success of the expedition) was the general wish of his soldiers, only could have brought him to such a resolution: that he was now sensible he had been misinformed; and as he perceived they were animated by that heroic spirit which informed the breast of every true Spaniard, he would stay with pleasure, and resume with fresh ardour his original plan of conquest and colonization, not doubting but he should conduct them, in the career of victory, to acquisitions worthy of their valour. But he at the same time intimated, that he would have no soldiers against their inclinations, the services of war suiting ill with reluctance, and that transports should immediately be got ready for such as were unwilling to follow his fortune.

This declaration was no sooner made than the air rung with shouts of universal applause. Many expressed their joy, because they really approved of the measure; others, who secretly condemned it, were obliged to join in the acclamations, partly to conceal their disaffection from the general, and partly to avoid the imputation of cowardice from their fellow soldiers; none being so hardy as to oppose making a settlement in Mexico, or so dastardly as to think of deserting their companions, on account of the danger or difficulty of the undertaking. Without allowing the one party leisure to reflect, or the ardour of the other time to cool, Cortez set about carrying into execution that design which he had long formed. As an introductory step to the settling of a colony, he summoned a council of his principal officers, and by their suffrage elected a council and magistrates, in whom the government was to be vested, after the manner of a Spanish corporation. Alonzo Hernandez Porto Carrero, and Francisco de Montejo, were appointed alcaldes; Alonzo Davila, Pedro and Alonso de Alvarado, and Gonzalo de Sandoval, were constituted regidores, and Juan de Escalante and Francisco Alvarez Chico, were raised to the dignities of chief alguazils and procurators general. All these gentlemen, and also the inferior magistrates, were firmly attached to Cortez, and the instrument of their election was framed in the king's name, without any mention of their dependance on Velasquez. After taking the accustomed oath, to observe reason and justice, according to their duty, for the greater service of God and the king, they began to exercise their several employments with the usual solemnity, calling their intended settlement *Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz*, "the Rich Town of the True Cross;" a name seemingly dictated by the two principles, religion and avarice, which chiefly prompted the Spaniards to all their attacks on the New World.

The first meeting of these magistrates was distinguished by a measure of great importance; the carrying of which into action appears to have been Cortez's principal motive for ordering their election, before he removed to the place where the settlement was to be established. As soon as the new council assembled, he desired leave to enter, and approaching, as a private person in civil affairs, with many marks of profound respect, which added dignity to the tribunal, and set an example of reverence for its authority, he spoke to the following effect, and in terms highly flattering to persons just entering on their authority: "Since, by the mer-

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cy of God, we have in this council the person of the king represented, I come into your presence, as if I appeared before him, without any other view than that of the public service; in which kind of ambition you will allow me the merit of not being your inferior. You are now deliberating on the means of establishing this infant colony, happy already in depending upon your guardianship; and it will not, I hope, be deemed foreign to the purpose, for me to inform you of my thoughts and resolutions, that you may not have occasion to deliberate afresh, and take new measures, by proceeding upon ill-founded suppositions. The corporation which to-day begins to take a form, under your government, is founded in a country but imperfectly known, full of people, and where we have already seen signs of resistance sufficient to convince us that we are engaged in an undertaking which will require the utmost exertion of our mental and personal abilities. This is not a time to depend upon peaceful maxims, or unarmed councils: your first care must therefore be to preserve the army, which serves you as a rampart; and it is my duty to inform you, that it is not at present in such a condition as is requisite for our hopes and our security. You all know, that I command this army without any other commission than that which I received from Diego Velasquez, and which was recalled soon after it was given me. I set aside the injury which he did me by his distrust; but I cannot fail to be sensible, and I am bound to mention it, that the military power, which we so much stand in need of, is lodged at present in my person, contrary to the inclinations of the man who bestowed it. It is founded on a title that cannot conceal the weakness of its origin. The soldiers are not ignorant of this defect; and I am too fully acquainted with it to desire to command them by such authority, at a time when the most perfect obedience is necessary, in order to render the enterprise in which we are engaged successful.

“It belongs to you, gentlemen, to apply a remedy to this inconveniency. The council, which here represents the king, may, in his royal name, provide for the government of his troops, by appointing to the command, and investing with proper authority, some person capable of conducting the future operations of the army. Several persons so qualified may be found: and that you may proceed without delay to such election, and deliberate with all imaginable freedom, I resign, from this moment, all right that can accrue to me from possession, and surrender into your hands the title by which I have held it. As my sole ambition is to promote the public service, I can, be assured, without offering the least violence to myself, take up a pike with the same hand that lays down the truncheon, and act with equal alacrity in the humble station of a private soldier, as in the exalted character of a general; for if, in war, men learn to command by obeying, there are also cases, in which the duty of obedience is taught by commanding.”

Having finished his speech, Cortez threw upon the table his commission from Velasquez, kissed the truncheon, and delivering it into the hands of the alcades, retired to his tent. As he had already concerted measures with his confidants, he was under little anxiety about the event; and the resolution of the council soon relieved him from any degree of suspense. They admitted his

resignation; but, as he had given the most satisfying proofs of his abilities for command, they unanimously elected him chief justice of the colony, and captain-general of the forces, ordering his commission to be made out in the king's name, with the most ample powers, which were to continue in force until the royal will should be known. In order to stamp this act with general approbation, and silence every cavil against its legality, the council immediately called together the troops, who were prepared for the occasion, and acquainted them with what had been resolved. The army with loud huzzas ratified the choice of the council; and the magistrates instantly waited upon Cortez, accompanied by a large body of the soldiers, now the only citizens, and presented him with his new commission, which he received with many professions of respect and gratitude*.

Cortez having thus brought his intrigues to the desired issue, and shaken off his mortifying dependance on the governor of Cuba, began to exercise more extensive powers. He had formerly felt himself the deputy of a subject, who had revoked his sub-delegated jurisdiction, but to whom he was still accountable for his conduct: he now acted as the representative of his sovereign, and assumed a proportional degree of authority. He had no occasion henceforth to temporize, and court those whom he had a right to command. His resolutions became more firm, and his manner more stately. The adherents of Velasquez, observing this change in his behaviour, and aware of its cause, could no longer continue silent spectators of his actions. They declaimed openly against the proceedings of the council as illegal, and those of the army as mutinous. Cortez, at first, did all that lay in his power, in order to remedy this evil, without proceeding to extremities; but finding that gentle measures had not the desired effect, he ordered Diego de Ordaz, Pedro Escudero, and Juan Velasquez de Leon, the chief propagators of these seditious principles, to be seized, loaded with chains, and carried on board the fleet. Astonished, and overawed, by this well-timed act of severity, their associates remained quiet; and Cortez, more desirous to reclaim than to punish his prisoners, sought their friendship with so much assiduity and address, while he threatened them with the loss of their heads, that a perfect reconciliation was brought about, without any mean compliance on the one side, or any servile advance on the other. Nay, what is truly remarkable, and equally for the honour of both parties, these very men became the firmest friends, and most favoured officers of Cortez; and on the most trying occasions, neither their connexion with the governor of Cuba, nor the remembrance of the indignity which they had suffered, tempted them to swerve from an inviolable attachment to his interest, nor did he ever betray the least jealousy or diffidence of their conduct†.

Having now established his authority on the most solid basis of which circumstances would admit, Cortez began to take measures for removing the fleet and army to the place where the settlement was to be founded. For this purpose it was necessary to send a party in search of provisions, which grew extremely scarce in the camp. Pedro de Alvarado was accordingly dispatched with an hundred

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 7. Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 3.

† Id. ibid.

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men, to range the neighbouring country, which he found entirely deserted, and returned in a short time with a plentiful supply of Indian wheat, fowls, and other necessaries. Every thing was now disposed for quitting St. Juan de Ulua. The fleet set sail for the bay of Quibislan, and Cortez proceeded with the army by land, taking the road of Zempoalla, and sending out scouts to examine the country. On his arrival on the frontiers of this province, he found all the houses and villages abandoned by the inhabitants, and even without any furniture or provisions; a circumstance which created suspicion, that the cazique's overtures of friendship were insincere. The temples only were left in their former situation. There the Spaniards found several idols, instruments for sacrificing, made of flint, the fragments of some human victims, and certain books, supposed to contain the principles of the Mexican religion, made of long skin or varnished cloth, so folded that every doubling made a leaf, and written or painted with that kind of imagery, symbols, or hieroglyphics, used in the dispatches sent by Teutile to Montezuma.

The army took up their quarters the first night in some of the best houses, and continued their march next morning through the same suspicious solitude, expecting every moment to be attacked, till they entered some delightful meadows, or savannas, where they met twelve Indians laden with provisions, as a present to Cortez from the cazique of Zempoalla, and a second invitation to come to his town, where he should be more plentifully entertained. This gave Cortez some encouragement to proceed, though it did not entirely efface the doubts which he entertained concerning the cazique's fidelity; he therefore retained six of the Indians as guides, that he might have an opportunity of asking them questions.

When Cortez approached the city of Zempoalla, the capital of the province of the same name, he was accosted by twelve noble Indians, who complimented him in their cazique's name, and apologized for their master not doing himself the honour of paying his respects in person. The town was large, and situated between two rivers, which descending from some mountains at a small distance, fertilized the country, and added to the beauty of the prospect. The buildings were of stone, covered or adorned with a sort of lime, white and shining, which made one of the scouts return exclaiming, that the walls were of silver; a mistake which occasioned much merriment in the army, and was afterwards made a jest of by many who probably believed it at the time. The squares and streets were filled with vast crowds of people, assembled to behold the entry of the Spaniards; but without any arms that could give the least suspicion, or any noise except what usually proceeds from an admiring multitude. The cazique came out to the gate of his palace, supported by some of his nobles, to whom he seemed to owe all his motion, being exceedingly fat and unwieldy. His habit was a mantle of fine cotton thrown over his naked body, enriched with various jewels and pendants, which he also wore in his ears and lips, and altogether made a most ludicrous appearance. Cortez found it necessary to check the risibility of his soldiers; and as he had occasion to put some restraint upon himself, the order was given with a forced severity. But as soon as the cazique began to speak, re-

receiving

ceiving the general with his arms, and welcoming the rest of the officers, his good sense was conspicuous, and gained the respect of the understanding. His discourse was short, and to the purpose, desiring Cortez to retire to rest after his journey, and quarter his troops in the apartments provided for them; adding, that he would take an opportunity to visit him next morning, when they could talk more at leisure concerning their common interests.

As an introduction to this visit, the cazique sent Cortez a present of jewels and gold, to the value of about two thousand pesos. He came soon after himself, with a splendid retinue, carried on men's shoulders, in a kind of litter or palanquin. Cortez went out to receive him, attended by his principal officers; and, after the first compliments were over, retired into a private apartment, accompanied by the cazique and his interpreters, judging it prudent to talk to him without other witnesses. Having made the usual speech relative to the grandeur of the king his master, the purpose of his coming, and the errors of idolatry, Cortez proceeded to tell the cazique, That one of the chief objects of his embassy was to redress wrongs, punish violence, and take part with justice and reason; touching on this point with a view of leading him, by degrees, to complain of Montezuma, and to discover what advantages might be drawn from his dislike of that monarch. The change of his countenance soon discovered that the proper string had been touched. Before he attempted any answer, he began to sigh, and at last broke out into bitter lamentations of his unhappy condition; telling Cortez, that all the caziques of the neighbouring provinces were under a miserable and shameful slavery, groaning beneath the oppressions and tyrannies of Montezuma, without sufficient force to free themselves, or even courage to think of a remedy. He intimated a wish, that the gallant strangers might assist in recovering the liberties of the Mexicans; but said it was not his design, by any trifling presents which he had the power of bestowing, to engage the general in so difficult an undertaking, nor would it be consistent with the laws of friendship to sell his insignificant services at so high a price.

Cortez discovered a mixture of art and generosity in this discourse, which he answered by giving the cazique the highest opinion of the Spanish valour and justice. He little regarded Montezuma's power, he said, having Heaven on his side, and a natural predominancy over tyrants; but he was under an indispensable necessity, he added, of passing on to Quiabitslan, where the oppressed and injured might apply for his protection, and all who, having justice on their side, stood in need of his arms. This information he desired the cazique to communicate to his friends, and assure them, that Montezuma would cease to tyrannize, or fail in the attempt, while he undertook their defence*.

Immediately after this interview Cortez prepared for his departure, extremely well satisfied with his reception at Zempoalla, and the disposition in which he had found the cazique, whence he drew presages favourable to his great design: and other circumstances conspired to convince him of the cazique's sincerity. When

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 8. Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 3.

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he was ready to march, that prince sent him, as a particular mark of his friendship, a present of twenty maidens, all of them the daughters of principal men, for the use of himself and his officers; and also supplied the army with a number of those Indians called *Tamemes*, whose office was to perform all servile labour, in order to carry the baggage and provisions. These men were a great relief to the Spanish soldiers, who had hitherto not only been obliged to carry their own baggage, but also to drag along the artillery.

Cortez, on his arrival at Quiabisan found the town, though naturally strong, entirely deserted; nor could he meet with any person to give him the least intelligence of the cause of such desolation, till coming to a square, where some temples stood, fourteen or fifteen priests came out pompously dressed, and accosted him in a most respectful manner, using every argument in their power to deprecate his displeasure. He encouraged them by caresses and presents; when recovering from their fright, which they had affected to conceal, they gave him to understand, that their cazique had withdrawn himself in order to avoid engaging in a war with such terrible enemies; or endangering his person, by trusting to the generosity of strangers, and that it was impossible to prevent the inhabitants from following his example; but as soon as they should be made acquainted with the goodness of such honourable guests, they would immediately return to their houses, and account it a particular happiness to serve and obey them. Cortez gave the priests fresh assurances of his friendly intentions; and by their persuasion several families returned to the town that night, and next day it was full of inhabitants.

Among others the cazique returned, bringing with him the chief of Zempoalla, who undertook to apologize for the diffidence which his neighbour had shewn of the Spaniards. This matter being settled, they both voluntarily introduced their complaints of Montezuma, and testified their sincerity by the tears which they shed, and the keen expressions of their resentment. They pathetically represented the misery of the people, and the dishonour of the nobility; and the cazique of Zempoalla added, by way of climax, "This tyrant, alike rapacious and cruel, besides impoverishing us by his exactions, and raising his wealth out of our calamities, demands our sons to be offered as victims on the altars of his gods, while his officers forcibly tear from us our wives and daughters, in order to sacrifice them to purposes more dishonourable*."

Cortez endeavoured to comfort the disconsolate chiefs, by assuring them of his protection, and was inquiring into their strength, and the number of tribes that would take arms, in order to rescue themselves from such an ignominious slavery, when two or three Indians entered, with all the marks of horror and surprise in their looks, and whispered something to the caziques, which made them quit the apartment in great confusion, without the ceremony of taking leave. The cause of this alarm was presently known. Six of Montezuma's royal commissaries, such as usually went through the empire to levy his tributes, had entered the town, and were then passing before the Spanish quarters. Cortez went out, accompanied

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 9. Herrera dec. II. lib. iii. c. 4.

by his captains, to see the procession, which was a spectacle altogether new to the Spaniards. The commissaries were carried in litters on men's shoulders attended by a great number of servants and inferior officers, who with large fans, made of beautiful feathers, cooled their masters, or shaded them from the sun, as occasion required. Their dress was magnificent, consisting of fine cotton mantles adorned with gold and precious stones, rich plumes on their heads, and jewels in their ears, noses, and lips. They passed Cortez, in much state, without deigning to pay him the least mark of respect. On the contrary, they seemed to eye him with a look of indignation and contempt; which so irritated the Spanisht soldiers, that they would have chastised the haughty Mexicans, had they not been restrained by the general, who rested satisfied, at the time, with sending Donna Marina, attended by a sufficient guard, in order to gather an account of their proceedings. By her means he learned, that, having seated themselves in the town-house, they summoned the caziques to appear before them; and after reprimanding them severely, for daring to hold any intercourse with those strangers whom the emperor had commanded to quit his dominions, they demanded, as an expiation for that guilt, twenty human victims, to be sacrificed to the gods of the great Montezuma.

As soon as Cortez was informed of this horrid demand, he sent for the caziques in the most private manner. On their appearance, he told them, that being able to penetrate into their most secret thoughts, he found they were disposed to yield obedience to the cruel command of the Mexican officers; and while they stood amazed at this seeming mystery, he charged them, under pain of his displeasure, not to countenance such abominations, or any longer comply with the shocking imposition of tributes in human blood; but, on the contrary, to assemble their people, to seize the commissaries, and leave him to maintain what was done by his advice. The boldness of this order terrified the caziques, who dreaded the anger of Montezuma, and were grown so pusillanimous by the habit of suffering, that they even respected the rod of tyranny: at first they positively refused to execute it; but when Cortez repeated his charge, in a resolute tone, they collected their retainers, and seized the officers, to the great joy of the populace, who were delighted with this spirited exertion, and enjoyed in idea the punishment which they hoped to see inflicted on those instruments of tyranny and barbarity.

The caziques proposed to execute their prisoners in the most ignominious manner; but finding Cortez averse to such a measure, they desired permission at least to sacrifice them to their gods, as if this had been a kind of lenity, their superstition being no less barbarous than that of the Mexicans. Willing in the meantime, to prevent bloodshed, Cortez put the commissaries under a Spanisht guard; and as he did not entirely approve, on mature deliberation, of commencing hostilities against Montezuma, without some better reason, nor thought it advisable to hazard the displeasure of that party which was forming among the malcontents, he resolved to steer a middle course; to suspend the effects of the resentment shewn by the caziques, and, without disgusting his new allies, to make a merit with the emperor of having saved his officers from the intended

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punishment. In consequence of this resolution, he ordered two of the prisoners to be brought to him with the utmost secrecy at midnight; and after receiving them courteously, he told them, that he had sent for them in order to set them at liberty; that they owed this favour solely to his friendship, and might assure Montezuma, that he would endeavour to procure the release of the other prisoners, as well as to convince the caziques of their fault, in refusing obedience to the sacred orders of their sovereign. For his own part, he said, he was desirous of peace, and hoped to deserve, by his exemplary conduct, all the respect and gratitude due to the ambassador of a great and generous prince.

The Mexican officers expressed in the warmest manner their sense of the obligation conferred, but intimated their fear of being again seized, on which Cortez ordered them to be conveyed in a boat beyond the limits of Zempoalla. Nor did his finesse end here. Next morning when the caziques acquainted him, in the utmost terror and confusion, that two of the prisoners had made their escape, he affected to be much surprised and incensed, blaming severely their want of vigilance; and under this pretence, he ordered the remaining prisoners to be carried on board the fleet, saying, that he would take upon himself the care of their imprisonment: an artifice by which he not only secured the confidence of the two caziques, but opened a road to favour with Montezuma, by charging his officers to treat the prisoners with all possible kindness.

Thus did Cortez pursue his schemes with the most refined policy, the good effects of which were soon evident. The fame of the valour, justice, and benignity of the Spaniards, quickly spread through the neighbouring provinces; and the caziques of Quiabisan and Zempoalla acquainted all their friends and allies of the happiness they enjoyed under the protection of the strangers; being freed from oppression, and secured in their liberties, by an invincible people, who knew the very thoughts of men, and seemed of a superior nature. It was even rumoured, that the gods had come down to Quiabisan, darting lightning at Montezuma for his impiety; and this report gained so much credit, as produced a veneration, that greatly facilitated the designs of the Spaniards. Above thirty caziques, lords of a fierce and warlike people, called Tonaques, who inhabited the mountainous part of the country, and were inveterate enemies of Montezuma, came and paid their respects to Cortez, offered their troops to assist him in any enterprise, and surrendered themselves wholly to his obedience, solemnly swearing fidelity and vassalage to the king of Spain*.

This confederacy being formed, the mind of Cortez was more at ease, and he resolved to found the town of Villa Rica, which had hitherto existed only in name, as the next grand step to the success of his undertaking. For that purpose the plain between Quiabisan and the sea was pitched upon, because of its fertility and conveniency, abounding in wood and water, and being contiguous to a good harbour. The workmen were distributed according to their several professions; and the Indians of Zempoalla and Quiabisan assisting, with equal

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 4. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 10.

skill and industry, the houses, or rather huts, began to rise incredibly fast, and the compass of the town was marked out by a mud wall, of sufficient strength to resist the assaults of an Indian army. The principal Spanish officers laboured with as much diligence as the meanest soldier, Cortez himself setting them an example of activity and perseverance in toil. Not satisfied with that scanty industry, which is thought sufficient in a superior to encourage others, he applied both his hands and his shoulders to the work; rousing persons of all ranks to a generous emulation, by convincing them, that every thing is honourable and praise-worthy that contributes to the public good *.

While the Spaniards were thus occupied in securing themselves a retreat, by the efforts of their united industry, the councils of Montezuma were distracted by contradictory resolutions. When informed of the reception given to the obnoxious strangers, by the chiefs of Zempoalla and Quiabiflan, he was so highly enraged, that he commanded a numerous army to be assembled, at the head of which he proposed to march in person, in order to punish the perfidious caziques, threatening to seize the Spaniards alive, and sacrifice them to his gods. But on the arrival of the officers whom Cortez had released, a new resolution was formed. They dwelt on the valour, generosity, and courtesy of the captain of the strangers, whose views were wholly pacific, and whose respect for the great Montezuma was as profound as that of the most faithful of his subjects. The anger of the haughty monarch was appeased, and he determined to try once more the effect of a negotiation recommended by presents. In order to give more weight to his suit, he appointed two of his nephews, assisted by five aged caziques, as counsellors, and attended by a magnificent retinue, to wait upon Cortez.

This embassy arrived when the new city was almost finished. After delivering the present, together with the emperor's thanks for the civilities shewn to his officers, the ambassadors complained of the disloyalty and presumption of the caziques; remarking that, though Montezuma could entirely rely on the leader of the strangers for the release of the rest of his officers, he could not help expressing his surprise, that so wise and gallant a people should chuse to reside among rebels: and they concluded with the emperor's request that the Spaniards should immediately leave that country, that he might have an opportunity of punishing the traitors without breach of friendship; admonishing Cortez, at the same time, to lay aside all thoughts of advancing to the court of Mexico, as the dangers and difficulties of the journey were inexpressibly great. On this last point they enlarged with a mysterious tediousness, it being the principal article in their instructions.

Cortez received the Mexican ambassadors with great respect; and, in order to conciliate their good will, before he returned his answer, he commanded the four imprisoned officers to be brought from on board the fleet, and delivering them up, said, That he hoped the error committed by the caziques was amended by the ressi-

* Id. *ibid.*

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tution now made; that the commissaries, by their cruel and extravagant demands, had in some measure drawn upon themselves the insult of that imprisonment; and that he had reason to resent their severity, as it was occasioned by the civilities generously shewn to him and his companions, when abandoned by Pilpatoe and Teutile, contrary to the laws of hospitality and of nations: but having nothing in view but peace, he was unwilling, he remarked, to dwell upon grievances; and that Montezuma might rest assured, that no attempt should be made to the prejudice of the royal authority by the caziques of Zempoalla and Quibislan, nor by those of the mountains, who were entirely at the devotion of their new guests. As to what regarded himself, he added, that he would explain the purpose of his embassy, when he had the honour of being admitted into the emperor's presence; in bar of which, so necessary visit, dangers and difficulties would be disregarded, the Spaniards being inured to hardships, and accustomed to seek glory amid the greatest perils.

This speech Cortez delivered in a tone so firm, that the Mexican ambassadors did not dare to reply, though it was evident they were dissatisfied. He dismissed them with many marks of respect, and a present of European trinkets; in full confidence that, notwithstanding their disappointment with respect to the principal object of their deputation, their report would prove favourable to the character of the Spaniards. Nor was this the only advantage which Cortez derived from this embassy. It exalted him in the opinion of the Indians. They conceived that he must be some deity, and none of the least powerful, who, with so small a force, durst presume to oppose a mighty monarch, and whose friendship Montezuma, too proud to kneel even to his gods, solicited with presents, which they considered as sacrifices*.

Cortez had occasion for all his policy and discernment; talents, in his situation, no less necessary than valour. He was obliged to guard against the selfish, and secret designs of his friends, as well as to oppose the open attacks of his enemies. A remarkable instance of the former now occurred. The cazique of Zempoalla being the inveterate enemy of the chief of the neighbouring province of Zempazingo, and thinking this a proper opportunity to take vengeance, and enrich himself with plunder, told Cortez, that a body of Mexicans were quartered in the capital of that district, and wasted his fields, and desolated his territory, on account of his attachment to the strangers. Cortez believed the feigned relation; and thinking it necessary to support the reputation of his arms, as well as that character of deliverer, which he had assumed, marched with four hundred Spaniards, and two thousand Zempoallans, to attack the town of Zempazingo; but to his astonishment, he found the place entirely deserted. The deceit was discovered by means of some priests, who had ventured to remain in the temples: the Zempoallan captains, whose people were already loaded with booty, were severely reprimanded, and threatened, for attempting to make their protector the instrument of their private revenge; and the cazique of Zempazingo, charmed with the generosity

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 10.

of Cortez, who had ordered all the plunder to be restored, submitted himself voluntarily to the crown of Spain *.

When Cortez returned to Zempoalla, he found the cazique waiting for him, at some little distance from the town, with great store of provisions to refresh the army, and much ashamed and troubled, that his deceit was discovered. He attempted an excuse, but the general would not hear it; telling him that he had laid aside his displeasure, and desired an amendment in future, which was the only atonement for pardoned crimes. Happy to be so readily forgiven, the cazique prepared another present of eight beautiful virgins of high condition. One of them was his niece, whom he intended for the general, desiring that he would take her as a wife, and distribute the rest among his officers. But Cortez, after expressing his sense of the honour intended him, replied, that it was not lawful for the Spaniards to take wives of a different religion; and therefore declined receiving the damsels, in that character, till such time as they should become Christians.

The intemperate zeal of Cortez, roused by this act of self-denial, had almost proved fatal to his whole enterprise. While attempting in vain to persuade the cazique to embrace Christianity, some of his fanatical soldiers entered, and cried, they could no longer bear the impieties which those hardened idolaters daily practised in their sight; and that, before they entered upon any other undertaking, they ought to vindicate the honour of God, which was the chief motive of their coming thither, and for which they were ready to lay down their lives. Cortez commended their pious resolution; and forgetting at once all the dictates of decency and sound policy, accompanied them to the principal temple, where, in a transport of enthusiastic fury, he ordered all the idols to be thrown down and broken, and a crucifix and an image of the Virgin Mary to be erected in their stead †. The people beheld this outrage with astonishment and horror, taking Heaven to witness that they had no hand in it: the priests excited them to arms; but so great was the ascendancy of Cortez, who ordered the cazique and some of the chief nobility to be secured, that the tumult was appeased without bloodshed; and the Indian maids being now baptized and given away, concord was perfectly re-established, and the ties of friendship strengthened by those of blood ‡.

Cortez having thus renewed his alliance with the Zempoallans, marched immediately for his new settlement of Villa Rica; and when he arrived there,

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 4. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 11. † The arguments made use of by Cortez, in order to convert the Zempoallans, as found in Herrera, are very plausible, though somewhat laughable. After telling them, that the God of the Christians was the giver of life, health, and plentiful harvests, he informed them, that this Divinity had loved mankind to such a degree, as to come into the world for our salvation, and take flesh in the virgin womb of a lady, whose image (to which he pointed) was honoured by all the catholic church, and through whose intercession they might expect greater blessings than from their idols. Hist. Gen. dec. II. lib. iii. c. 4.

‡ Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 4.

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he found a small vessel just come into the harbour, commanded by Francisco de Salcedo, accompanied by captain Luis Marin, and ten men, who had left Cuba in order to attach themselves to his fortune. They brought with them one horse and a mare *. But the pleasure which this supply gave to the general, though considerable in his present circumstances, was much allayed by the intelligence which he received, that Velasquez, whose enmity against Cortez was still unabated, had pursued his resentment with unrelenting rigour, and obtained a commission from the king, appointing him adelantado not only of the island of Cuba, but sole director of all the discoveries which should be made on the continent by his means, with power to bestow employments and equip expeditions, in whatever manner he should think proper †.

The Spaniards had now been above three months in the Mexican dominions, every moment of which had been distinguished by the most important transactions, though not of the military kind, and the settlement being almost completed, it was resolved to march up the country; but this new intelligence made it necessary for Cortez, in the first place, to vindicate his conduct to the court, and efface any bad impressions, which might be occasioned by the misrepresentations of the governor of Cuba. He likewise thought it essential to his security to have his commission immediately from the king, and wholly independent of Velasquez; for which purpose he determined to send dispatches to Spain, with an account of his proceedings. He accordingly laid his intentions before the magistrates of the new colony, and obtained from them a letter to Charles V. containing an account of the success of the expedition, with a pompous description of the provinces already brought under the obedience of his Catholic Majesty, and a view of the schemes which they had formed, and the hopes which they entertained, of subjecting to his dominion the whole empire of Mexico, the riches of which were beyond credibility: and they concluded with a minute detail of the motives which had induced them to renounce all connexion with Velasquez, to settle a colony dependant on the crown alone, and to vest the supreme power, both civil and military, in Cortez; humbly entreating his majesty to ratify what they had done by his royal authority. This letter was accompanied by another from the general himself, in which he entered more particularly into his justification, and gave strong assurances of his well grounded expectations of annexing New Spain to the crown of Castile ‡.

Cortez, however, did not rest the success of his negotiation merely upon these representations. Sensible that the Spanish court, accustomed to exaggerated accounts of every new country by its discoverer, would pay little regard to the most splendid descriptions of the Mexican empire, unless they were supported by a corresponding specimen of its wealth, he solicited his officers and soldiers to relin-

* The manner in which Herrera mentions this circumstance is highly expressive of the situation of the Spaniards, and the importance of which horses were to them. "This ship," says he, "brought captain Luis Marin with a mare, and ten soldiers, and Salcedo had a good horse." Dec. II. lib. iii. c. 4.

† Dr. Robertson entirely omits all these particulars, and even the arrival of the vessel.

‡ Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 4. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 12.

quish what they might claim, as their share of the treasure collected, that the whole, instead of the fifth, might be sent to the king: and so great was the ascendant which he had acquired over their minds, and such their own romantic ideas of future wealth, that an army of indigent and rapacious adventurers, on the first intimation of this design, voluntarily offered, as a present to their sovereign, the entire fruits of their dangers and toils, that their general might be continued in command. Portocarrero and Montejo, the chief magistrates of the colony, were appointed to carry this present to Spain. The best ship in the fleet was given to them, with Alaminos as their pilot, and express orders to sail through the channel of Bahama, in order to avoid falling into the hands of the governor of Cuba *.

While preparations were making for this voyage, some soldiers and sailors, secretly attached to Velasquez, formed the design of seizing one of the brigantines, and making their escape to Cuba, in order to give the governor such intelligence as might enable him to intercept the ship which was to carry the treasure and dispatches to Spain. Fortunately, however, when they had got possession of the vessel, and were ready to embark, their design was betrayed by one of their associates, and they were immediately secured. Two of the ringleaders were punished with death, and two whipped. The rest were all pardoned, except the pilot, who was condemned to lose one foot †.

This conspiracy, though so seasonably detected, filled the mind of Cortez with the most disquieting apprehensions, and prompted him to carry into execution a design which had long engaged his thoughts. It made him sensible, that some sparks of sedition still lurked among his troops, which the first appearance of adverse fortune would be apt to blow into a flame, as long as there was any possibility of retreat left: he therefore determined to reduce his followers to the necessity of adopting the same heroic resolution which he had himself formed, either to conquer New Spain or perish in the attempt. For this purpose he determined to destroy his fleet: but as he durst not venture to execute such a bold measure by his single authority, he communicated it to his friends; pointing out to them the desirable accession of strength which they would derive from the junction of an hundred men, now unprofitably employed as sailors, and urging the propriety of fixing their eyes and wishes solely on the great objects before them, without once thinking of a retreat. He next referred his design to the council, who immediately stamped it with their approbation; and the whole affair was conducted with so much address, that the very sailors supported the propriety of the resolution, declaring that the ships had been so long at sea, and were so much damaged by accidents, as to be altogether unfit for service. They were therefore sunk, with universal consent, after bringing ashore their sails, rigging, iron-work, and whatever else might be of use ‡.

Immediately after this effort of magnanimity, to which, all circumstances considered, there is nothing equal in the history of mankind, Cortez mustered his

* Id. ibid.
Solis, lib. ii. c. 13.

† Ut supra.

‡ Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 4. De

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army, and began his march towards Mexico, with five hundred men, fifteen horse, and six field pieces; the rest of the troops, consisting chiefly of such as from age or infirmity were less fit for active service, being left as a garrison in Villa Rica, under Juan de Escalante, the chief alguazil, an officer of merit, and firmly attached to the general's interest. The cazique of Zempoalla furnished him with provisions, and with two hundred Tamemes, to carry the baggage, and drag the artillery. This prince, and his allies, also offered a considerable body of troops; but Cortez was satisfied with four hundred of the most robust, among whom he took care to chuse several persons of such distinction as might serve as hostages for the fidelity of their countrymen. Nothing remarkable occurred till the army reached Zocothlan, the capital of a province of the same name. Cortez gave the cazique notice of his arrival and designs. The answer was favourable, and quarters were provided for the troops. But the civilities of this chief, whose name was Olinteth, were far from being cordial, nor was the accommodation or entertainment of the Spaniards by any means to their wish; though the general took care to repress the anger of his soldiers, in order to preserve the appearance of friendly intentions.

In an interview with Olinteth, who was a man of capacity, and lord of many towns, Cortez asked the usual question, whether he was a subject of the emperor of Mexico; to which the cazique instantly replied, "Who is not a vassal or a slave to Montezuma?" Cortez endeavoured to convince him of his mistake; saying that the sovereign, whom he served, had subjects greater than Montezuma. The cazique smiled at the bold assertion, and without entering into any comparison, went on extolling Montezuma's grandeur; the immensity of his riches, the strength of his armies, and above all, the unhappiness of such as attempted to resist his power, for they were condemned to perish on the altars of his gods. Cortez perceived the design of this discourse, and remarked, with a composed air, that he had no occasion to be troubled at the power of Montezuma, with which he was not unacquainted, as his views were altogether friendly; but, though he desired peace, that he was not afraid of war. "I will not," said he, "draw the sword without just provocation: but, once drawn, every thing will yield to my displeasure, and universal carnage ensue. Nature will assist me with her prodigies, and Heaven with its lightnings; for it is the cause of Heaven which I come to vindicate, by banishing your vices, and the errors of your religion, even those sacrifices of human blood, which render your sovereign so terrible*."

With these words Cortez broke off his visit, and turning to his attendants, said, "This, my friends, is what we seek; great dangers and great riches: by the one we acquire fame, by the other fortune." A well timed observation, by which he entirely effaced from the minds of his soldiers all bad impressions that might have been produced by the pompous speech of Olinteth; and in consequence of his resolute reply to that chief, the army was better accommodated, and more plentifully supplied with provisions, the greatest respect being shewn to the meanest Spaniard †.

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 15.

† Id. *ibid.* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iv. c. 1.

When Cortez proposed to leave Zocothlan, where he had continued five days, in order to refresh his men after their fatiguing march, a difficulty arose concerning the route which he should pursue. The cazique recommended that of Cholula; because the country was fertile, and the inhabitants being more inclined to commerce than war, would grant a secure and commodious passage to the troops: and he warmly remonstrated against the road of Tlascala, as the people of that district were of a warlike and sanguinary disposition. But the Zempoallan captains privately told Cortez that he must not rely on this advice; that Cholula was a large and populous city, the inhabitants of which were insidious and treacherous, and that Montezuma commonly there quartered a body of his troops; that the Tlascalans were indeed a warlike race, but from them he had nothing to fear, as they were the friends and confederates of the Toronaques and Zempoallans, and waged continual war with Montezuma; and that the Spaniards, being in company with the ancient allies of this people, would not be considered as strangers, but entertained as associates. Cortez approved of their reasoning, and commanded his troops to march towards the province of Tlascala; on the frontiers of which he soon arrived, as it bordered on that of Zocothlan.

Tlascala was at that time a considerable state, abounding with warlike and industrious inhabitants, and above fifty leagues in extent. Though not so far advanced in the arts of civil life as the subjects of Montezuma, the Tlascalans had attained to a degree of improvement much beyond their rude neighbours. Their country, though not remarkable for fertility, being mountainous and uneven, was well cultivated; a striking proof that they had made considerable progress in agriculture. They dwelt in large towns, whose structure was rather durable than handsome, being chiefly built on eminences with a view to defence: and they had baths and pleasure gardens. Their government was at first monarchical, but the independent spirit of the people not brooking subjection to an individual, whom they had found too frequently inclined to abuse his power, they threw off the yoke; and after living for some time in a state of anarchy, formed themselves into a regular commonwealth. They divided their country into different districts, over which certain magistrates presided, who levied taxes, and administered justice within their several jurisdictions; but it was necessary that their laws and edicts should have the sanction of the senate of Tlascala, in which the supreme authority resided. This body was composed of citizens chosen out of each district by an assembly of the people. The republic was now in the zenith of its power and glory; having for a series of years foiled all the efforts of Montezuma, and established its independency on the most solid basis, in consequence of alliances with all the free tribes, who had felt, or dreaded the violences of Montezuma. Among these was the Otomies, a brave but barbarous people, fierce in war, and cruel in conquest*.

Cortez, informed of these particulars, determined to send an embassy to the senate of Tlascala, in order to demand a free passage for his troops through the

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iv. c. 5. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 15.

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territories of the republic; and for this service he chose the four Zempoallan captains, who had advised the road of Tlascala, that their credit might be peculiarly interested in the success of the negotiation. The Zempoallans, having received their instructions, immediately adorned themselves as ambassadors, after the manner of their country. For this purpose, they put upon their shoulders a mantle of fine cotton, wreathed and knotted at the ends. In the right hand they bore a large arrow, with the point turned down, and on the left arm a small target, made of shell. The nature of the embassy was known by the feathers of the arrow; the red denoting war, and the white peace. By such insignia ambassadors were known, and respected in their journeys; but they were obliged to confine themselves to the high road, in the country whither they were sent, otherwise they lost all the privileges and immunities of their office, and were liable to be treated as enemies.

With these ensigns of their deputation, the Zempoallan captains arrived safe at the city of Tlascala, the capital of the republic, and were admitted to an audience of the senate. The members of that assembly were seated, according to their seniority, on low chairs, called Yopales, made of one piece of wood. When the ambassadors entered, they rose up, and welcomed them with a kind of reserved civility, and important gravity. After paying their respects to the senate, the Zempoallans walked leisurely up to the middle of the hall, where they knelt down, and without lifting up their eyes, waited for leave to speak. The eldest senator ordered them to declare their business; when, all seating themselves on their own legs, the orator of the embassy delivered himself to the following effect: "Noble republic, potent and valiant Tlascalans, the lord of Zempoalla, and the mountain-caziques, your friends and confederates, send you health; and wishing you plentiful harvests and the death of your enemies, desire to acquaint you, that certain invincible men are arrived among them from the East, who seem to be divinities, for they sail in great palaces, and command thunder and lightning, the peculiar arms of Heaven. They serve another God, whom they say is superior to ours, and who detests tyranny and human sacrifices. Their captain is ambassador from a potent monarch, who, impelled by religious motives, desires to reform the abuses of our country; to teach us the knowledge of the true God; and rescue us from the oppressions and violences of Montezuma. Having already delivered our provinces out of bondage, and placed us in a state of liberty, he requests to pass through your republic in his way to Mexico, and to be informed in what the tyrant has offended you, that he may add your cause to the many others, which justify his undertaking.

"With this notice of their designs, and with experience of their benignity, we therefore come before you to entreat, and request in the name of our cazique and all his confederates, that you will receive these strangers, as the friends and benefactors of your allies: and, on the part of their captain, we can assure you, that his dispositions towards the republic are perfectly pacific and benevolent, and that he only demands a free passage through your country after you shall be convinced of the sincerity of his friendship, and that his arms are the instruments of justice,

justice, reason, and religion, which vindicate the cause of Heaven; mild and good in their own nature, and terrible only to the wicked."

This harangue being finished, the ambassadors raised themselves upon their knees, and making a profound reverence to the senate, seated themselves as before on their legs, expecting their answer in that posture. After a short consultation, the eldest senator replied in the name of the rest, That they admitted the proposition of their allies, the Zempoallans and Toto-naques, with all due respect and gratitude; but that their answer to the captain of the strangers required farther deliberation.

The Zempoallans now retired to their apartments in the Calipsca, or building appropriated for the accommodation of foreign ministers, while the senate of Tlascala shut themselves up, in order to discuss the propriety of granting the demand of Cortez. A variety of opinions divided that assembly, and many warm debates ensued. Some were for attacking the strangers, and destroying them as dangerous intruders, and enemies to the country in general; others were for granting their demand, and attaching them by civilities to the republic; while a third party steered a middle course, and advised giving them no molestation, provided they continued their march without entering the dominions of Tlascala. After much altercation, without any general opinion being adopted, Magiscatzin, one of the oldest senators, and a person of great weight, desired to be heard. He mentioned the tradition of their ancestors, that a race of conquerors of divine origin, who had power over the elements, should come from the regions of the rising sun, and subdue all who opposed them*. "The strangers," added he, "come from the East; their arms are fire, and houses on the waters are their vessels. Of their valour you have already heard, by the fame of their actions in Tabasco: their goodness is extolled, even by your own allies; and if we cast our eyes upon those comets and signals from Heaven, which have so much terrified us of late, methinks they speak to us, and come as messengers of this great novelty. But I will suppose that these signals are to be disregarded as casual, and that the strangers are men, like ourselves; yet what harm have they done us, that we should consult about revenge. Upon what injury sustained shall we found this violence? Shall Tlascala, which maintains its liberty by its victories, and its victories by the reputation of its arms, by its equity and magnanimity, enter voluntarily into a war, which throws a stain upon its justice and valour?—These people come in a peaceable manner: their request is to pass through our republic, which they do not attempt without our permission; where then is their crime? where our provocation?—They arrive on our frontiers, confiding in the protection of our friends; and shall we lose our friends, by committing hostilities against those who desire our friendship? What will the rest of our allies think of this action?

* If we may believe the earliest and most authentic Spanish historians, such a tradition, or apprehension, from what source soever it might flow, or by whatever accident it happened to be suggested, prevailed universally among the natives of New Spain, on the arrival of Cortez and his companions in that country.

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and what will fame report of us, if five hundred men oblige us to take arms ? Shall we gain as much by overcoming them, as we must lose in reputation by having feared them ? — My opinion is, that we admit them with courtesy, and grant them the passage they desire : if they are men, because their request is reasonable ; and if they are any thing more, because the will of the gods is a sufficient motive.”

This speech was received with general applause, and all the senate seemed inclined to follow the advice of Magiscatzin, when Xicotencal rose up ; a young senator of great spirit, valour, and capacity, who on account of his heroic actions, had been raised to the command of the armies of the republic, and who answered the venerable sage in words to the following purport. “ Grey hairs,” said he, “ are not always infallible in their decisions ; age being more inclined to cautious maxims than bold undertakings. I pay all due respect to the opinion and character of Magiscatzin ; but you will not think it strange, considering my time of life and my profession, if influenced by sentiments less scrupulous, I become an advocate for politics more daring. When talking of war, we are often deceived by that quality which we call prudence ; for whatever resembles fear is not virtue, but weakness. There is, I own, an expectation among us of certain oriental visitors ; an expectation kept up by a prophecy, which is slow in completion. It is not my intention to discredit a tradition that has become venerable by the consent of ages : but tell me, I pray you, what security have we that these are the promised strangers ? Is it the same thing to come from the East as to come from the celestial regions, which we consider as the birth-place of the sun ?—The fire-arms and great embarkations, which you call sea-palaces, may be the effects of human industry, and only admired for their novelty ; or perhaps they may be the illusions of some enchantment, like that deception of the sight which we call cunning, or slight in our diviners. Was what they did in Tabasco any more, than breaking an army superior to themselves in number ?—and shall this be thought miraculous in Tlascala, where greater actions are daily performed by natural means ? May not the benignity, which they have exercised towards the Zempoallans, be an artifice, more readily to gain the people ? At least I shall deem it such ; a delicious sweetness which is offered to the palate, in order to conceal their poisonous designs : for we know too much of their insolence, ambition, and avarice, to believe them capable of benevolent intentions. These men, if they be not rather monsters flung by the sea upon our coasts, rob our natives, live at discretion, guided by no other law than that of their own will, thirsting after gold and silver, and given up to the delights of sensuality. They despise our civil institutions, and endeavour to introduce innovations, equally dangerous to religion and government. They destroy our temples, (as appears from their conduct at Zempoalla and other places) pull in pieces our altars, and blaspheme our gods ; and is this the race you call celestial ? and can any one doubt, whether we should resist ? and can we listen without scandal to the name of peace ? If the Zempoallans and Totonaques have admitted them into their friendship, it was without consulting our republic ; consequently we are under no ties by

by the law of nations. They advanced under no better protection than the want of thought, which deserves to be punished in them as presumption, and indiscretion in those that support them. The frightful appearances so magnified by Magiscatzin, being the constant harbingers of calamities and misfortunes, should rather incline us to treat the strangers as enemies, than as benefactors; for Heaven, by its prodigies, does not give us notice of those things for which we wish, but which we ought to fear. Our felicities never come accompanied with terrors: nor does Heaven light up comets to lull us asleep, but to awaken us to a sense of our danger. My opinion therefore is, that we assemble our forces, and crush those haughty strangers at one blow: for they come into our power pointed out by signs in the heavens, in order that we may consider them as the oppressors of our country, and the revilers of our gods; and that, establishing the reputation of our arms on their punishment, the world may perceive that it is not the same thing to be immortal in Tabasco, and invincible in Tlascala."

These arguments being more agreeable to the genius of a people bred up in arms, and breathing nothing but war, than those of Magiscatzin, soon effaced from the minds of the audience every trace left of his more cautious advice, and the speech of Xicotencal was echoed with shouts of applause. But on re-examining the matter, it was thought, by the more experienced part of the senate, an act of the highest imprudence, and most inconsiderate rashness, and contrary to all the maxims of sound policy, to risk the fate of the republic on the event of a single battle. Temilotecal, another of the heads of the commonwealth, endeavoured therefore to strike a medium between the two extremes. He was of opinion, he said, That messengers should be dispatched to the commander of the strangers with intelligence that he should be well received in that city; and, in the meantime, as they had troops in readiness, that Xicotencal should advance towards him with the Otomies, and try what those men were whom some called gods. "If they are vanquished," added he, "Tlascala will gain eternal honour: if not, the blame may be laid on the Otomies, as a barbarous and rash people, and room will still be left for the republic to treat of peace." This counsel being generally approved of, was ordered to be put in execution; after which the Zempoallans were called in, and told, that it was resolved to receive the strangers in a friendly manner. A pretext was, however, made for detaining the ambassadors, in a kind of underhand imprisonment, in order to gain time for Xicotencal to march against Cortez, and for the senate to return their answer according to the event*.

Cortez, having remained eight days encamped on the frontiers of Tlascala, in anxious expectation of the return of the ambassadors, resolved, with the advice of his officers and the Zempoallan chiefs, to advance towards the capital, in order to learn the intentions of the republic. In consequence of this determination, he marched with his army in good order, omitting no precaution

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iv. c. 1. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 16.

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necessary to be observed by those who set foot, for the first time, in the country of an unknown enemy; and taking a road between two mountains, whose skirts formed a delightful valley, he came to a great wall, which ran from the one mountain to the other, entirely shutting up the passage. It was twenty feet thick, and a fathom and an half high; and on the top was a parapet, after the manner of European fortifications. The entrance was narrow and winding; the wall in that part dividing, and making two walls, which circularly crossed each other, for the extent of ten paces. Cortez was informed by the Indians of Zocothlan, that this was the boundary of the province of Tlascala, built by the inhabitants in former ages, as a bulwark against the invasions of their enemies; and it was fortunate for the Spanish general, that they had not possessed themselves of it, in order to oppose his march. This neglect may be accounted for two ways; either because the Tlascalans did not so soon expect the arrival of the Spaniards, or because they chose to engage them in the open field, that their forces might have more room to act to advantage, by surrounding the inferior number of the enemy.

Having passed the wall without any obstruction, Cortez again formed his army, and continued his march slowly, and in good order, till coming into a more spacious country, the scouts discovered a party of twenty or thirty Tlascalans, whose plumes (only worn by soldiers in actual service) denoted their hostile intentions. The general ordered them to be called by signals of peace, which they disregarded, running till they incorporated with another party, then turned about, and put themselves in a posture of defence. They were attacked by the Spanish cavalry; and made such a gallant resistance that, regardless of their own loss, they wounded two men and five horses, before they offered to give ground. As soon as they began to yield, a body of five thousand Tlascalans rushed out from the thickets, where they had concealed themselves, to the assistance of their countrymen. At this instant the Spanish infantry happily came up to support their slender body of cavalry. The enemy attacked with incredible fury, but they were so warmly received, and so much disconcerted by the first discharge of the fire-arms, that they retired in confusion, and afforded the Spaniards an opportunity of pursuing them with great slaughter: an advantage which Cortez declined, as the day was far advanced, from a suspicion that this so easy victory might be a stratagem to draw him into an ambuscade.

The Spaniards spent the night unmolested, and advanced next morning in order of battle, to an eminence, whence they descried the whole Tlascalan army, composed of near forty thousand men of different nations, drawn up on the plain, under the command of Xicotencal, general of the republic*. The experience which

* It was in their march this morning that the Spaniards, for want of better provisions, fed upon Tunas, a fruit which the country spontaneously produces. This Dr. Robertson considers as a proof of the uncultivated state of Tlascala; and thence draws a conclusion, that the armies of the republic could not be so numerous as generally represented. But the same necessity might happen to an hostile army, no larger than that of Cortez, in the extreme parts of the best cultivated

which the Spaniards had gained in Tabasco preventing them from being discouraged at the vast superiority of the enemy, they marched down the hill with perfect composure; formed themselves on the plain; brought down the artillery without hurry or confusion; and disposed every thing for attacking the Tlascalans with the strongest assurance of victory, though they found some difficulty in bringing their confederates to be of the same opinion. Xicotencal, however, shewed his generalship, by disposing his troops in such a manner as to surround the Spaniards. This manœuvre was no sooner effected, than he contracted the circle with incredible diligence; showering such quantities of darts, stones, and arrows, as almost covered the little army of Cortez. But being made sensible, by the slaughter of his troops, of the inferiority of the Tlascalan weapons to the firearms of the Spaniards, he closed with them, in order to try the effect of his pikes and swords. In this respect the Tlascalans were little more upon an equality with their enemies, though they fought with astonishing obstinacy and impetuosity: they fell in heaps, either by the Spanish spears, or the volleys discharged among them from the artillery, every shot doing execution.

It was the practice of the Tlascalans, from motives of tenderness or mistaken policy, to carry off their wounded and slain, even in the heat of the engagement; by which means their union was often broken, and the force of the impression which they might have made by a joint effort diminished. But Cortez, notwithstanding this pious solicitude, was sensible of the decrease of their numbers: their fury abated; and they fell back to a greater distance, though they still continued the battle. The Spaniards, who had hitherto fought in the form of a square, presenting a front on every side, now formed into a column by the command of the general, and pushing on with irresistible fury, entirely broke and routed the enemy, after an obstinate dispute.

In the pursuit one Nieron, a Spanish horseman, engaging himself too far, was surrounded, and taken prisoner by the enemy, after they had killed the animal on which he rode, and cut off its head. This accident discouraged the Tlascalans to rally and renew the charge, which they began with redoubled fury; and terrible must have been the slaughter on both sides, had it continued: but fortunately for the Spaniards, who were now almost worn out with fatigue, Xicotencal ordered a retreat to be sounded, on discovering that most of his officers were slain, apprehensive that he should not be able to govern such a multitude of soldiers by his single authority. The Spaniards, therefore, remained masters of the field, though the Tlascalans also exulted, claiming the victory because they had not

ted country in Europe; or even in the interior parts, if care was taken to carry off and destroy the provisions. The Spaniards experienced no want in Tlascala, after they entered into an alliance with the republic; nor even during the war, when they had advanced farther into the country. The Tlascalan general ordered them to be plentifully supplied with provisions, that it might not be said he vanquished an army perishing of hunger; a circumstance which favours so strongly of the spirit of chivalry, that we might suppose it to be suggested by the romantic imaginations of the Spanish historians, were not writers the most opposite in sentiments, united in attesting it as a fact.

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been completely defeated; and the head of the Spanish horse, the only mark of their triumph, the rider having been rescued by his companions, was carried by Xicotencal before the army on the point of a spear, presented to the senate, and afterwards solemnly sacrificed to their gods. The loss of the Tlascalans was very considerable, though it could not be exactly ascertained, by reason of the practice already mentioned. Of the Spaniards nine were wounded, besides several Zempoallans, but none slain*.

Cortez having now leisure for observation, discovered a village seated on an eminence which commanded the country. Of this post he possessed himself without opposition, the inhabitants having retired on the defeat of the Tlascalan army, leaving behind them abundance of provisions, which proved a very seasonable refreshment to his troops. Here Cortez fortified a camp, and kept watch in person the greater part of the night, with one third of his army; a precaution which might have seemed unnecessary, had he known, that it was a maxim among the Tlascalans never to fight after the going down of the sun. He spent next day in strengthening his entrenchments; and as he was neither so vain as to think the republic would be so much humbled by their loss as to give up the contest, nor so confident as not to be sensible of the danger of encountering a force so much superior, he was disposed, notwithstanding his past success, to renew his declarations of friendship, but could find no way to introduce the negotiation. This dilemma was occasioned by the return of the Zempoallan envoys, who had broke, as they said, from their confinement, and narrowly escaped being sacrificed, in order to appease the god of war.

Certain it is, that the Tlascalans were much affected by the death of so many brave officers and men of rank; and this concern might perhaps push the senate to wild expedients, as it divided them by a variety of counsels. Some, dignifying the Spaniards with the name of immortal, declaimed loudly in favour of peace; but still the majority were for trying the fortune of Tlascala in another engagement. Xicotencal stood his ground, notwithstanding the clamours of Magiscatzin, and animated them by displaying the trophy of the horse's head: he desired a reinforcement, concealed his loss, and promised success with so much confidence, that the senate was ready to enter into a measure dictated by his revenge, when an auxiliary cazique arrived with a body of ten thousand men. This supply being unexpected, was looked upon as succour from the gods: the courage of the republic revived with fresh ardour; and it was unanimously resolved to augment the army, and prosecute the war at all hazards.

Meanwhile Cortez was not idle. After having put his camp in a proper posture for defence, he advanced with a party towards the capital, and plundered several villages, carrying off a great quantity of provisions, and some prisoners. From them he had intelligence, that Xicotencal was encamped at the distance of two leagues, and diligent in recruiting his forces, which would in a few days be far more numerous than in the former engagement. Sensible that, if victory

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iv. De Solis, lib. ii. c. 17.

depended upon numbers, the Spaniards would have no chance with the Tlascalans, Cortez released all his prisoners, saying, he would augment Xicotencal's army to shew the republic how little he feared her utmost strength; an act which gave the enemy the most extravagant ideas of his valour and generosity, and contributed not a little to his future success. By the most intelligent of these prisoners he sent a message to Xicotencal, the substance of which was, that the loss which the republic had sustained gave him much concern, but that the senate had only themselves to blame, having ungenerously treated in an hostile manner those who came with pacific intentions; that notwithstanding this just cause of displeasure, he was still willing to enter upon a negociation, as if nothing had passed; but he threatened, if Xicotencal did not immediately disarm, to destroy the republic utterly, and make the name and misfortunes of Tlascala a terror to the neighbouring nations*.

This bold message, it was hoped, would intimidate the Tlascalan general; but it had the very opposite effect, rousing his resentment to such a degree, that he sent the prisoners back mangled for their presumption, and with an answer equally vain-glorious. He desired them to tell the general of the strangers, That he should see him in the field at the first rising of the sun, it being his intention to carry him and all his people alive to the altars of the gods, and there to sacrifice them in the name of the republic, that their blood might appease the guardians of Tlascala, and secure to it the blessings of peace; that he gave him this information that he might have time to prepare himself, the Tlascalans not being accustomed to lessen the glory of their victories by the security of their enemies.

While the two generals thus irritated each other by their mutual defiance, both were making the most vigorous preparations for carrying their threats into execution, and putting an end to the war by a decisive battle. Cortez kept strict watch during the night, and advanced, as soon as day began to appear, about half a league, to an advantageous post, where he determined to wait for the enemy, in that disposition which the experience of the former engagement dictated to be necessary, and which the information of Xicotencal encouraged him to make with care, from an assurance that it would not be made in vain. He secured his flanks by the artillery, issuing orders in regard to the times and distances at which the cannon could be discharged to most advantage: every contingency was foreseen; and the general himself took his post at the head of the cavalry, that he might superintend the whole, succour those who were hard pressed, and move with more facility and celerity to the different parts of his army as occasion might require. In a short time the enemy's van guard appeared, and the scouts returned with advice that an army was in motion which covered the whole face of the country. It consisted of at least fifty thousand men, being the entire strength of the republic united to that of her allies. The golden eagle of Tlascala, a standard only brought forth on the most extraordinary occasions, was displayed aloft in the middle of the multitude, and every thing declared that the combat would be bloody and decisive, the fate of the commonwealth depend-

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 18.

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ing on the issue of the battle. When the Tlascalcan forces came within a proper distance, the artillery poured such destruction among them, that their more advanced parties reeled back upon the main body, and that vast army seemed for a while divided between the different passions of fear, shame, and resentment; but the latter at length prevailing, they advanced in a tumultuous manner, and were saluted with such volleys from the musquetry and cross-bows, as put them a second time in suspense, whether they ought not to leave the field to the enemy. Xicotencal, however, roused their drooping courage by his eloquence, and animated them to such a degree by his example, that, rushing on like a torrent, in one collected effort, they broke the Spaniards and Zempoallans; and it required all the abilities of Cortez, the valour of his soldiers, and the experience of his officers, to form his line again, or withstand so furious a charge, without being entirely defeated. Nor is it certain that the Spaniards would have been able to keep the field, had it not been for such another accident as that which saved them in the former engagement.

The Tlascalans were of a sudden observed to be in the utmost confusion, their troops moving to different parts, and dividing and bearing upon each other, until the rear-guard retired in a tumultuous manner, and those engaged in the front were left to find their safety in flight. Cortez suspected some stratagem, and therefore pursued with caution; but he soon learned from his prisoners, that the proud and passionate Xicotencal had affronted one of the most powerful of the confederate chiefs, who, resenting the injury, drew off his forces, and with them the bulk of the auxiliary troops: so that Xicotencal was obliged to leave the field, and a complete victory to the Spaniards. The loss of the Tlascalans was very considerable; though the exact number could not be ascertained by reason of that practice, already mentioned, of carrying off their killed and wounded. The Spaniards had only one man killed, and twenty wounded: yet were the soldiers dissatisfied, taking shame, to use the language of the Spanish historians, that they should have been broken and put into disorder by barbarians, and returned to their quarters melancholy, and dispirited, like men who had been vanquished. This dejection led to dissention and mutiny, the soldiers blaming each other, and many charging the whole fault upon the general; declaring that they would not sacrifice themselves to gratify his rash humour, but repair to Villa Rica, and leave him to obey the dictates of his ambitious temerity*.

Cortez was immediately informed of these discontents; but as he was sensible that fear is a violent passion, which, in its first motions, reason cannot subdue, he retired to his tent, without attempting to reduce his soldiers to obedience, till they should be recovered from their fright. The malcontents, however, continuing to murmur; and neither the authority of the officers, nor the arguments of their

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 19. Herrera, dec. II. lib. iv. c. 2. The murmurs of the Spanish soldiers on this occasion may be deemed an incontestible proof that they did not think their victory decisive, and were afraid to hazard another battle with the Tlascalans. Before the engagement began, Xicotencal sent them a plentiful supply of provisions, that it might not be said he took advantage of their necessities. Herrera, at sup. c. 4.

well-affected companions being sufficient to appease them, Cortez found it necessary to shew himself, and endeavour to bring them back to their duty. For this purpose, he ordered all the Spaniards to assemble, under pretence of consulting them on the present state of affairs, and placing near his person the most turbulent, "It admits," said he, "of little doubt what measures we are to pursue, considering the present posture of affairs, having gained three victories in a short time, in which your valour and the weakness of your opponents were equally conspicuous. Overcoming an enemy, indeed, is not the termination of a war: a victory must be improved as well as gained; and the dangers attending success are to be guarded against, no less than those that obstruct it. But this, my friends, is not what gives me concern: I stand in need of your advice on a more important point. Some of the soldiers, I understand, are again desirous, and stir up others to propose, that we should abandon our undertaking. I am willing to believe, they found their opinion upon substantial reasons, but a measure of so much importance should not be treated of in secret cabals. Tell me therefore your opinion freely, that we may all reason on what is most eligible for all; let us consider coolly our present condition, and then resolve upon something that may not afterwards be contradicted.

"This march was begun with your approbation, I may say with your applause. Our resolution was to pass on to the court of Mexico. We all devoted ourselves to the undertaking from zeal for our religion and the service of our king, as well as from our hopes of fame and fortune. Our success has been answerable to our most sanguine wishes. The Indians of Tlascala, who have endeavoured to oppose our designs, with all the strength of their republic and her allies, are now humbled, by repeated defeats. It is impossible they can long delay to request peace, or to grant us a passage. When this happens, how greatly will it add to our reputation! What will these barbarians conceive of us, who already rank us with their gods?—Montezuma, who feared our approach, as is evident by his answers and repeated embassies, will behold us with redoubled terror, after having vanquished the Tlascalans, the most valiant people in New Spain, and who have by force of arms maintained their liberties against him. It is highly probable that he will make us very advantageous offers, lest we should join with his enemies: and it is possible that this same difficulty, which we now encounter, may be the means that God makes use of to facilitate our designs, by making trial of our constancy: for he will not work miracles for us, till he has proved both our hearts and hands. But should we turn our backs, all our labours will be lost, and our splendid views will at once vanish. What can we then hope for?—and what have we not to fear?—This very vanquished people, now appalled and fugitive, will collect fresh courage; and knowing all the short cuts, and difficult passes in the country, will pursue and harra's us in our retreat. Our Indian friends, who at present stand by us, contented and courageous, will immediately desert us, and return home, publishing every where our disgrace; and the Zempoallans and Totonagues, our confederates, and our only hope in misfortune, losing their opinion of our power, will be apt to conspire against us.

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I repeat it again, let every thing be duly considered; what we have to hope from advancing, and to fear from retreating, that we may be able to determine which is most eligible: for I leave you at full liberty to reason and resolve, having laid the inconveniencies of a retreat before you, rather to free myself from blame, than to influence your opinion."

Scarcely had Cortez finished this speech, when one of the dissatisfied soldiers, convinced by his arguments, said to his companions aloud, "Our general instructs us how to act, while he seems only to ask our advice: we cannot now retire without sacrificing our hopes, our glory, and our lives." The rest of the malcontents acquiesced, confessing their error: the well disposed party rejoiced at this change of opinion; and a resolution to prosecute the enterprise was announced by universal acclamations.

Matters went on very differently at Tlascala. Nothing was there to be seen but confusion, disorder, and dismay. The second defeat of the army spread general consternation. The common people cried out for peace; and the nobility, had they been unanimous, were unable to carry on the war without them. It was the opinion of the more timid, that they ought to retire with their families to the mountains: of the more superstitious, that the Spaniards were deities, and ought as such to be worshipped; of the more resolute, that another engagement should be hazarded; and of the more moderate and prudent, that peace should be solicited, and the Spaniards gained by kindness, since they could neither be conquered by numbers nor valour. Consultations were held in the senate on this subject, the result of which were, that they did not think the strangers really divinities, but that their actions were so extraordinary as to require the assistance of magical powers: it was therefore resolved to consult the magicians of the republic, that the force of one enchantment might be removed by that of another. These sages were accordingly called in; and pretending that they had already discovered by their mysterious art the doubt that was to be propounded to them, and considered the case, they delivered the following response, in which they pretended to unfold the cause of those supernatural acts of valour performed by the Spaniards: That the strangers were the offspring of the sun, procreated by his active energy in the mother-earth of the oriental regions; that by day, while cherished by his parental beams, they were superior to human force; but when he retired to the west, and withdrew his animating heat, that their vigour declined and faded, like the herbs of the field, and they dwindled down into mortal men. It was therefore necessary, they urged, to attack this wonderful race by night, and destroy them before the rising sun rendered them invincible*.

In consequence of this oraculous advice, and profound discovery, the truth of which it would have been held impious to dispute, the senate of Tlascala resolved, contrary to one of their most established maxims in war, to attack the Spaniards after the going down of the sun. Orders to this purpose were immediately dispatched to Xicotencal; and that general, whatever credit he might think due to

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 19.

the opinion of the magicians, cheerfully received his instructions, being happy to have the senate's authority for fighting, that he might wipe off his former disgrace. He accordingly advanced towards the Spanish entrenchments, under cover of the night, with a body of ten thousand men, selected from the flower of his army. Cortez however, as usual, was upon his guard: the centinels on the out-posts brought advice, that the enemy were in motion, and every thing was disposed for their reception without noise or confusion. The Tlascalans were suffered to ascend the wall drawn round the camp, before any intimation was given that their design was discovered; and then such a shower of bullets were poured from the cannon, small arms, and cross bows, as made dreadful havock, and convinced Xicotencal of the mistake of the magicians. But this discovery served only to rouse his courage, and push him on to desperate efforts. The assault was made in three different parts at once, the whole body of the Tlascalans rushing upon the Spanish works; and their exertions of valour were truly astonishing, considering their unacquaintance with the art of forcing entrenchments. They climbed upon each other's shoulders, in order to gain the wall, and paid no regard to the death of those who went before, but pressed on, till they themselves met with the same fate. For several hours the battle raged with unparalleled fury. At length Xicotencal convinced, by the slaughter of his troops, that perseverance would avail him nothing, ordered a signal to be made for retreating. This was no sooner perceived by Cortez, in the slackening of the attack, than he sent out a party of foot, and all his horse, to harrafs the enemy's rear; and the Tlascalans, struck with terror at the sound of certain bells, fixed, by design in the breast plates of the Spanish detachment, fled precipitantly, without attempting the smallest resistance. In the pursuit great numbers of the enemy were slain, and many of their dead, which they had not been able to carry off, were found in the neighbourhood of the camp. Cortez's loss was incredibly small, considering the vast quantity of darts, arrows, and stones, found within the entrenchments; only one Zempoallan being killed, and three Spaniards wounded*.

Convinced by melancholy experience that their magicians had deceived them, and that the strangers were alike invincible during the darkness of night, and when the sun was in his meridian, the Tlascalans sunk into despondency. The commonalty grew more clamorous for peace; the nobility were dissatisfied and divided, and the senators ashamed and silent. The magicians were immediately punished, as the authors of the late disgrace; two or three of them being sacrificed on the altars, in order to appease the supposed indignation of the gods, who afflicted the republic with such heavy calamities, and the rest were severely reprimanded, and delivered over to contempt. The majority of the senate now inclined to peace, and applauded the prudence and foresight of Magiscatzin, who had predicted all that was come to pass: even the most incredulous declared, that the Spaniards were certainly the celestial race mentioned in their prophecies. Orders were accordingly dispatched to Xicotencal to suspend hostilities, and keep on

* *Id. ibid.* 211

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the defensive, till he was made farther acquainted with the resolutions of the senate, and the success of the negotiation of peace which they proposed to set on foot.

Xicotencal, however, refused obedience to this command, arrogantly answering, that he and his soldiers were the senate, and would support the honour of the republic, since it was abandoned by those who were called Fathers of their country. Rendered desperate by repeated defeats, he determined to attack the strangers a second time by night; not that he paid any regard to the opinion of the magicians, but that he might be enabled to put in execution a stratagem which he had formed for the destruction of his enemies. Observing that the neighbouring peasants carried provisions to the Spanish camp, which they exchanged for European toys, he detached forty soldiers, in whom he could confide, clothed after the manner of those rustics, loaded with fruit, fowls, and bread made of Indian corn; desiring them to observe particularly the nature and strength of the works, and where they might be forced with least difficulty. But the curiosity of these spies exciting suspicion, they were seized and put to the torture, when the whole scheme was discovered. From their confessions it appeared, that an assault was to have been made that very night, by twenty thousand Tlascalans, at different quarters of the camp, agreeable to the report which they should deliver, after inspecting the fortifications.

Cortez, though at this time indisposed, gave the necessary orders for resisting the enemy, and then deliberated on the punishment of the delinquents, ordering fourteen of the most obstinate to be punished with the loss of their hands or fingers, and dismissed them in that condition, with a message to Xicotencal, that the general of the strangers sent back these men to acquaint him with the state of the entrenchments, and was waiting impatiently for the assault. The Tlascalan army, then in full march, was struck with terror at the bloody spectacle, and Xicotencal experienced the most exquisite distress at the discovery of a stratagem, on which he rested his last hopes. He persuaded himself that the secret thoughts of his people, of whose fidelity he was confident, must have been obtained by the assistance of some divinity. While he was deliberating how to act in such circumstances, messengers appeared from the senate, with orders to deprive him of the command of the army, on account of his insolence and disobedience, and prohibiting all his officers, under the penalty of being declared traitors, any longer to obey his instructions: and this mandate arriving immediately after the impression made on the troops by the dismembering of the spies, and on the general by the discovery of his deep laid scheme, no man was so bold as to oppose the decree of the senate. The confederates immediately withdrew their forces, and the Tlascalan troops marched towards the city, leaving Xicotencal to answer for his conduct at the tribunal of the republic*.

The Spaniards now remained in the utmost suspense and doubt whether they were to expect the enemy. The whole night they continued in arms, without venturing to take any repose, or next day, until their scouts in-

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 20.

formed them, that the Tlascalcan camp was removed to a greater distance. At length the joyful news arrived, that the hostile army was dissolved: and this intelligence was soon confirmed by the appearance of ambassadors from the senate of Tlascala, with terms of pacification. "If you are a cruel god," said they to Cortez, "we present you with five slaves, that you may devour their flesh and drink their blood: if you are a benevolent deity, accept an offering of incense and variegated plumes: and if you are a man, here are fowls, and bread, and fruit for you and your companions to eat*." They apologized for the conduct of the republic, laying the whole blame of the war upon the Otomies and Chontales, their confederates, the first fallies of whose fierceness the authority of the senate had proved insufficient to restrain; but that they were now disarmed, and the commonwealth very desirous of peace: that they did not only bring with them the voice of the senate, but also of the nobles, and commonly, to request that he would march with all his followers to the city, where he and they might stay as long as it was agreeable in perfect security, and be honoured and served as the brethren of the gods†.

Cortez, though sensible of the falsity of this excuse, suppressed his resentment, and desired the ambassadors to acquaint the senate, That the peace which they proposed was agreeable to his inclinations; but that they sought it after too unjust and obstinate a war to obtain it readily, and might consider it as no slight proof of his goodness, that he did not pursue the dictates of revenge, and impose laws upon them as a conqueror: that he must see how they persevered in their resolution to merit his friendship, before he laid himself under any obligations, and would employ the intermediate time in endeavouring to appease the indignation of his captains: in a word, that he would suspend the punishment with an uplifted arm, and leave it to the discretion of the senate, either to procure pardon, by a thorough amendment, or sustain the blow, which must put an end to the existence of the republic of Tlascala‡.

By this affected severity Cortez meant to check the pride of the senate, and more particularly that of the friends of Xicotencal, who might possibly grow insolent, on a presumption that the Spaniards must be greatly weakened, should they grant peace immediately. He was likewise desirous that the fame of his victories should have time to spread over Mexico, in order to be assured what effect it produced on the councils of Montezuma, that he might be enabled, in consequence of such information, to conduct his negotiation with the republic to more advantage; a degree of forecast which does the greatest honour to his political talents. Every thing fell out as he could have wished. Montezuma, who had regular accounts of every transaction in Tlascala, was so much struck with the wonders reported of the Spanish general, that he determined to send him an embassy, in order to compliment him on his conquests over the republic. The ambassadors were also instructed to throw every possible obstruction in the way of a pacification, should such a thing be talked of, and to endeavour, by fresh pre-

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iv. c. 2.

† De Solis, lib. ii. c. 20.

‡ Id. *ibid.*

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sents and civilities, to engage Cortez not to approach nearer to the capital of the empire. Five Mexicans of the first rank were appointed to execute this ~~ambassa-~~ mission, and arrived in the camp soon after the departure of the Tlascalan ambassadors. Cortez received them with much ceremony and respect, heard them ~~ambassa-~~ respectively, and thanked them for Montezuma's present, but declined giving them an answer, till he should have an opportunity of treating with the ministers of the republic. This precaution answered more valuable purposes than the general expected: for the Mexicans had not been long in the Spanish quarters, before they betrayed their whole instructions, by the indiscreet manner in which they asked questions concerning the negotiation with the republic; and by that means Cortez was made fully sensible of the importance of an alliance with Tlascala to the accomplishment of his designs.

The senate, in the meantime, endeavoured to convince the Spaniards of their pacific intentions, and the sincerity of their advances towards an accommodation, by ordering them to be plentifully supplied with provisions at the expence of the republic: and in a few days a second embassy, in the name of the commonwealth, arrived at the Spanish camp, headed by Xicotencal in person, attended by fifty gentlemen of his party and kindred. Xicotencal seems to have undertaken this negotiation merely from motives of patriotism: he had tried the efforts of arms, as long as any probability of success remained; and now he was ambitious of promoting peace, because he believed it not only salutary to the republic, but the only means by which he could merit the good opinion of Cortez, whom he esteemed, and even adored as a hero, inspired and assisted by the gods. He advanced with the open and bold air of a soldier; and having paid his respects to the general, took his seat, told his name, and began his speech: he confessed that he was the sole author of the war, and the commander of the armies of Tlascala and her allies, believing the Spaniards to be favourers of Montezuma, whose name he abhorred; but that he was now sensible of his mistake, and being struck with their valour and magnanimity, came with the merit of submission to put himself into the hands of his conqueror, hoping by this act of humiliation to obtain pardon for the republic, whose authority he had not only to propose, but to implore peace, and to accept it on such terms as the general of the strangers should think fit to impose. "I ask it," said he, "once, twice, thrice! in the name of the senate, nobles, and commons of Tlascala, who earnestly request you to honour their city with your presence. There you shall find quarters provided for your troops, and all the respect and service that can be expected from those, who being themselves brave, submit to entreat and obey. I only desire," added he, "and that not as a condition of the peace, but as an act of your own generosity, that the inhabitants may be well used, and our gods and wives protected from military liberty."

Cortez was so much delighted with the noble freedom of the Tlascalan warrior, that his satisfaction was visible in his countenance; but lest Xicotencal should mistake its cause, and ascribe it to the joy with which he received the proposals of peace, he answered with the utmost gravity, by his interpreter, That the re-

republic was highly blameable for entering on so unjust a war, and the general for prosecuting it with such obstinacy: the Spaniards, however, he said, being averse to blood, except in cases of extreme necessity, and sensible of the valour of the Tlascalans, granted them the peace desired, from respect to the gallant resistance they had made, though upon a mistaken principle; that he would favour the city with a visit, and take care the soldiers should be guilty of no violence or extortion; adding, that he would give the senate timely notice of his approach.

Xicotencal was much concerned at this delay, which he considered as a pretence for examining more particularly into the sincerity of the Tlascalans; and turning his eyes upon the audience, exclaimed with vehemence, "Ye have reason, great Teules!" so they called their gods, "to chastise our insincerity with your distrust: but if the whole republic of Tlascala, speaking to you through my lips, is not sufficient to gain your credit, I who am the captain-general of her armies, and these gentlemen of my retinue, the principal nobles and greatest captains of the state, will remain as hostages for your security, and continue in your power, or submit to be imprisoned, during your residence in our city." This offer, however, though highly pleasing to the Castilian pride, was generously refused by Cortez, who magnanimously answered, That he and his companions had occasion for no other security but their own valour to maintain themselves, without fear, in the city of Tlascala, having already withstood the armies of the state; that he had no doubt of the sincerity of the republic, as she must know peace to be her interest; that the word of a brave man was to him a sufficient pledge; and that he would proceed to Tlascala as soon as the proper dispositions could be made for quitting his present station, and dispatching the ambassadors of Montezuma*.

The Tlascalans were no sooner gone, than the Mexicans employed their utmost address to persuade Cortez, that no confidence ought to be placed in the protestations of a barbarous and perfidious people, who only wanted to draw him into an indolent security, the more easily to destroy him and his whole army; but when they found him resolute in adhering to his promise, they used entreaties, and implored, with the utmost submission, that he would defer his visit to Tlascala for the space of six days, that they might have time to inform Montezuma of what had passed, and receive his farther instructions. Thinking it necessary to maintain the respect due to so great a monarch, and in hopes of removing those difficulties which had hitherto obstructed his request of being admitted to the court of Mexico, Cortez consented to this proposal. At the expiration of the term limited, the messenger returned, and along with him six gentlemen of the royal family, with a splendid attendance, and another present more valuable than the former. These new ambassadors represented the great Montezuma's profound respect for the prince whom the strangers obeyed, and whose power was conspicuous in the valour of his subjects. The emperor, they added, found himself

* De Solis, lib. ii. c. 21.

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disposed to cultivate the friendship of this monarch, by paying him an yearly tribute, dividing with him those riches in which Mexico abounded; because he held him in the utmost veneration, believing him to be the offspring of the sun, or at least the lord of those happy regions where light has its origin: but that two conditions were necessary, previous to this agreement. The first of these was, That no peace should be concluded with the Tlascalans; and the second, That Cortez should lay aside all thoughts of marching to Mexico, as the sovereign, by the laws of the empire, could not suffer himself to be approached by strangers. They concluded with an invective against the Tlascalans, declaiming loudly on their perfidy; the danger into which the general was plunging headlong, through his own obstinate credulity; and the little reason he would have to complain of the most fatal consequences, should he continue to disregard the most salutary admonitions*.

The fear of Montezuma, rather than his esteem or veneration for the Spaniards, was evident through the whole of this discourse. Cortez perceived it, and deferred his answer; only saying to the ambassadors, that it was necessary they should take some rest after so long and fatiguing a journey. He was willing they should be witnesses to the conclusion of the peace with Tlascala; and he also thought it of importance, that they should be prevented from returning before that event was placed on the most solid basis, lest Montezuma, enraged at the projected alliance, should begin to put himself in a posture of defence. Hitherto he knew no preparations had been made, the court of Mexico relying wholly upon the force of presents, and the exaggerated representations of the imperial power; and it was his business to keep up this infatuated negligence and security, which had taken possession of the emperor and his council.

But these delays, though necessary to Cortez, proved extremely irksome to the Tlascalans, who came to a resolution, as the last proof of their sincerity, that the whole senate in a body should wait upon the general at his quarters, in order to conduct him to their city, determining not to return till they had convinced him of their pacific intentions, and broke off the negociation with Montezuma; a jealousy and anxiety which Cortez knew well how to improve to his own advantage. The appearance of the senate was solemn, and the procession numerous, all adorned with white plumes, and other emblems of peace. These heads of the republic were conveyed in litters, or palanquins, supported by the shoulders of inferior officers; Magiscatzin, that venerable chief, who had always favoured the Spaniards, occupying the most honourable place. Next to him was carried the father of Xicotencal, blind with age, but vigorous in his intellects, and much respected on account of his judgment and experience. A little before they arrived at the general's quarters, they alighted; and so great was the curiosity of old Xicotencal, that he advanced before his companions, and desired those who led him, to bring him near the captain of the strangers. When introduced to Cortez, he embraced him with marks of extraordinary satisfaction; then touched him all over, as if desirous to

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iv. c. 4. De Solis, lib. iii. c. 2.

become personally acquainted with him, and supply by feeling the want of fight. As soon as they were seated, the blind sage, at the request of Magiscatzin, whose privilege it was to open the embassy, spoke to the following purport.

“ Now, valiant captain, whether of mortal or immortal race, you hold in your power the senate of Tlascala, the utmost proof of our submission. We come not to excuse the errors of our republic, but to take them upon ourselves, depending upon your generosity for our forgiveness. We are the men who resolved upon the war; but we are likewise the men who desired peace. The first act was hasty, the second slow: and resolutions well considered are not usually the worst. On the contrary, it requires great pains to efface what hath been impressed upon the mind with difficulty; and you may rest assured, that the very delay hath afforded us a fuller knowledge of your valour, and laid a deeper foundation for our constancy. We are not ignorant that Montezuma endeavours to divert you from our alliance: harken to him as to our enemy; but, at the same time, beware of his poisonous arts. We do not desire your assistance against him, our own forces being sufficient for our defence, provided you do not take part with the tyrant: we are only sorry to observe, that you seem to rely upon his promises, because we are acquainted with his perfidy and subtilty. You have already offered us peace: if Montezuma does not hinder you from granting it, what does?—Why are you deaf to our earnest solicitations? Why do you forbear to honour our city with your presence?—We are come in a body, resolved at once to gain your good-will and friendship, or to surrender our liberties into your hands, as a conqueror; chuse, therefore, which of the two is most desirable, to be our master or our ally. As to ourselves, we have no choice: we must either be your friends or your slaves.”

Cortez could not resist this invitation. Charmed with the good sense, candour, and sincerity of the venerable orator, he answered the senate with much respect; made presents to each of the members, and assured them, that as soon as he could procure, from the neighbouring villages, a sufficient number of people to conduct his artillery, he would set out for Tlascala; admonishing them to return in the mean time, and even exerting his authority to that purpose, as he could not lodge them with the conveniency due to their rank, quality, and kind intentions. With this promise they departed, well satisfied with their reception; and next morning, as soon as the sun began to appear, the Spaniards found at their quarters five thousand Tamemes, or Indians of burden, so zealous to do them service, that they disputed who should carry the greatest loads*.

This was a new and flattering instance of the attention of the senate, and did not escape the notice of Cortez, who began his march, as soon as the necessary preparations could be made; but with all that order and caution constantly observed by his little army, to which exact discipline he owed great part of his success. On every side the fields were crowded with spectators, and the air was filled with shouts of joy, and bursts of admiration. The senate came a consider-

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 2.

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able way out of the city to receive the Spaniards, with all the pomp observed on public solemnities; and having paid their compliments, surrounded the person of the general, and conducted him to Tlascala. When they entered the town, the rejoicings became louder and more tumultuous, human voices being mixed with the harsh sounds of the Indian flutes, horns, and drums; and the crowd was so great, that the officers of the senate found the utmost difficulty in clearing a passage for the procession. The women strewed flowers in the streets from the windows; and some of greater resolution and less reserved, pressed through the multitude, and put garlands into the hands of the soldiers; while the priests, in their sacerdotal robes, offered incense, and a variety of perfumes to their nostrils. All shewed in their countenances the sincerity of their hearts, though variously expressed; the satisfaction of many being lost in wonder, and the joy of others in veneration. The quarters assigned were extremely commodious; the whole Spanish army being lodged in adjoining and spacious apartments, in contiguous squares. Cortez had carried with him the ambassadors of Montezuma, though altogether with their will, and kept them under his immediate protection, as they were afraid of some violence from the Tlascalans*.

Tlascala was at this time a very populous city, founded upon four eminences, and naturally fortified by rocks, precipices, and steep ascents. These four hills formed four wards, each governed by a cazique, under the authority of the senate, in which the supreme legislative and executive power was lodged. They were united, and a communication between them was opened, by several streets, lined with thick walls, which served as a defence to the town, where the situation was not thought sufficiently strong by nature. The houses were low, consisting only of one floor; the roofs flat, and decorated with galleries. The streets were narrow and crooked; and the whole was evidently contrived more for external security, than internal conveniency or elegance, the last care of republics. The inhabitants were plentifully supplied with provisions from the neighbouring country, which abounded so much in Indian corn, as to obtain to the province the name of the Land of Bread. It also produced in fruit and game, but yielded no salt: and so great was the hatred of the Tlascalans against Montezuma, that they held it less inconvenient to eat their victuals without this necessary seasoning, than to have any commerce with the Mexicans, by whom only they could be supplied†.

These marks of the power and austere character of the Tlascalans made Cortez somewhat anxious in regard to his situation, though he strove to dissimble his concern. He continued the guards, however, at his quarters; and when he went abroad, he took part of his men with him, not forgetting their fire-arms. The soldiers also, by his order, went together in companies, provided in the same manner. But the Tlascalans, who sincerely desired the friendship of the Spaniards, without any artifice or affectation, were hurt at this military appearance, which seemed to indicate a suspicion of the faith of the republic: a point

* *Id. ibid.*† *De Solis, lib. iii. c. 3.*

which so nearly concerned the honour of the state, was debated in the senate; and Magiscatzin was sent to notify their opinion to Cortez, and represent to him, How unsuitable those warlike precautions were with a people subject, obedient, and desirous to please; that the great vigilance, with which he lived in his quarters, shewed how little he thought himself secure; and that the soldiers, who passed through the streets with their lightning always on their shoulders, though they offered no violence, offended more by that distrust, than if they really oppressed them. Arms, he added, ought to be considered as an useless load, where they were not necessary, and looked ill among those who were sincere friends, and themselves disarmed: and he concluded with entreating the general, in the name of the senate, and of all the citizens, that he would command those precautions and disagreeable appearances to cease, as they seemed to preserve signs of an unfinished war; and were, at best, indications of a scrupulous friendship.

Cortez replied, that he was well satisfied of the good faith of the senate, and the good-will of the citizens of Tlascala; nor did he entertain the least suspicion that any thing would happen in breach of that peace which they had so much desired: that the guards used, and vigilance observed in his quarters, were conformable to the custom of his country, where soldiers lived always after a military manner, and enured themselves in times of peace to the fatigues of war; by which means they learned obedience, and were accustomed to vigilance: that their arms were also a part of their dress, and worn by way of ornament, and as a badge of their profession. He therefore desired them to remain assured of his friendship, and not to think those things which were befitting the soldiery, inconsistent with the peace that he had concluded with the republic.

With this ingenious apology was Cortez able to satisfy the Tlascalans, who even expressed their admiration of his rigid discipline, and to conciliate their confidence without abating any part of his former caution. Every day brought some fresh proof of their confidence: and he obtained from them, in his different conferences, information of every particular relative to the state of the Mexican empire, or the qualities of its sovereign, that could be required in regulating his future conduct, whether he should have occasion to act as a friend or an enemy. But all the fruits of this information, as well as the advantages to be derived from such powerful and warm confederates, were in danger of being sacrificed to a transport of intemperate zeal.

The Spaniards had converted the largest apartment in their quarters into a chapel, where mass was every day celebrated, in presence of the principal Tlascalans, who, in silent admiration, remarked all that passed on such occasions. Prompted by a natural curiosity, and inflamed by this circumstance, Magiscatzin one day asked Cortez whether he was mortal; because his actions, and those of his people, seemed more than human, and contained that sort of goodness and greatness, which they venerated in their gods. But he did not understand those ceremonies, he said, by which the Spaniards seemed to acknowledge a superior deity; for although they made preparations for a sacrifice, he did not

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perceive any victim or offering in order to appease the gods. Cortez eagerly seized this opportunity to enter upon topics, both religious and political, which always lay near his heart; the grandeur of the crown of Spain, and the glory of God in the catholic church.

He ingenuously confessed that his condition, and that of his people, was mortal; not daring, as his countrymen observe, to make use of deceit, where the eternal salvation of souls was concerned. But he added, that as the Spaniards were born in a better climate, they had more understanding, and greater strength than the rest of men: and thus, though he renounced the attribute of immortality, he retained the reputation of being invincible. He also told them, that he not only acknowledged a superior in heaven, adoring there the only Lord of the Universe, but that he and his men were, besides subjects and vassals to the greatest prince upon earth, under whose dominion the Tlascalans, as brothers to the Spaniards, also were, and would surely yield the same obedience. From politics he shifted to religion, and spoke fervently against idolatry, the multiplicity of the gods of the natives, and the abomination and horror of their human sacrifices; but when he came to touch on the mysteries of the catholic faith, he thought they deserved a better expositor, and therefore called in to his assistance father Bartolome de Olmedo, chaplain to the expedition.

Olmedo endeavoured to bring the Tlascalans by degrees to the knowledge of the Christian doctrines, explaining the principal points after such a manner as seemed best adapted to their uncultivated understandings. But, after all the arguments of the good monk, Magiscatzin, and those who attended him, gave small hopes of their conversion. The God whom the Spaniards adored, they said, was doubtless very potent, and must be greater than any of their Teules; but that each of these was powerful in his own province, it being impossible for one to superintend every thing, and that they had Teules, or gods, for all the necessities of human life. They admitted, with less difficulty, the proposition of their temporal subjection, immediately acknowledging themselves vassals of the king of Spain; but they entreated, with humility and earnestness, that Cortez would no longer oblige them to listen to any proposal for the change of their religion, lest their gods should come to the knowledge of it, and call down the tempests, and other instruments of divine vengeance to destroy them. They consented, however, to abolish human sacrifices, as contrary to the law of nature; and a great number of miserable captives, the victims of future festivals, confined in prisons and cages, were set at liberty.

But this concession was not sufficient to satisfy the ardent zeal of Cortez. Astonished and enraged at the obstinacy of the Tlascalans, he proposed to execute by force, what he could not accomplish by persuasion, and was going to overturn their altars, and break in pieces their idols, with the same violence which he had exercised at Zempoalla, when father Olmedo, more cool and considerate, checked his pious rashness. This prudent and political priest, represented the danger of such an attempt in a large city newly reconciled, and filled

filled with people no less superstitious than warlike: he declared, that he was not without some scruple concerning the proceedings at Zempoalla; that a similar conduct might overthrow the altars of the Tlascalans, but would leave the idols in their hearts: to which he added, that the conversion of those infidels was only to be effected by patient instruction and gentle usage, and that violence could serve no other purpose but to make them dislike the truth; that before they attempted to introduce God, they ought to banish the Devil, a warfare of another kind, and where different arms were required *. Convinced by these reasons, Cortez moderated his zeal: the Tlascalans were left in possession of their gods; and from that time forward, not a single offence passed on either side, during the stay of the Spaniards in Tlascalá; where a firm alliance was cemented between the two nations, of so much consequence to the future conquest, that the natives of this province continue to enjoy a variety of privileges and immunities, in reward of their ancient friendship and fidelity, and which are some small compensation for the loss of their liberty.

After Cortez had resided some time in Tlascalá, and was fully satisfied of the attachment of his new allies, he began to think of dismissing the Mexican ambassadors. His answer was short and artful. He desired them to inform Montezuma of what they had heard, and what had passed in their presence; the humility and earnestness with which the Tlascalans had solicited peace, and by which they had deserved it, together with the affection and kind offices by which they maintained it: that now they were so much at his disposal, and he had gained such an ascendancy over them, that he hoped to be able to reduce them to the obedience of Montezuma; and that this being one of the important consequences which would attend the embassy, among others of greater moment, he was under the necessity of soliciting the emperor's permission to continue his journey, that he might afterwards deserve the acknowledgments of so magnanimous a prince.

With this answer, and the necessary guard, the Mexican ambassadors departed; and Cortez was only prevented from following them, in the same jour-

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 3. The advice of father Olmedo on this occasion, deserves great praise, whether we consider it in a political or religious light; though it seems to afford little foundation for the extravagant and tautological compliment of Dr. Robertson, who expresses himself thus on the subject: "At a time when the rights of conscience were little understood in the Christian world, and the idea of toleration unknown, one is astonished to find a Spanish monk of the sixteenth century among the first advocates against persecution, and in behalf of religious liberty." Olmedo's merit however, in the present instance, after all this astonishment, appears to have been nothing more than a decent share of good sense joined to moderation of temper; by the enjoyment of which he was enabled to consider coolly the political situation of the Spaniards, and to offer such arguments as were most likely to influence the conduct of Cortez, whose understanding was hurried away by a torrent of pious enthusiasm: and, to reduce the cause of this astonishment yet lower, the Doctor, as a servant of the mysteries, should have known, that the spectators are always more affected by the dancing of the puppet, than those who touch the wire, or he that constructed the machinery. Hence priests of all religions, in all nations and ages, have been less under the dominion of fanaticism than any other class of men in the community:—and Olmedo was a priest! and his sacred person was in danger!

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ney, by receiving the submissions of the principal towns of the republic and her allies. While that business was going forward, with the solemnity necessary to inspire respect, an incident occurred which surprised the Spaniards, and struck terror into the Tlascalans. The volcano of Popocatepec, on the top of a mountain, which rises above all the neighbouring hills, is to be seen from the highest part of the city of Tlascala, at the distance of eight leagues. It constantly sent forth smoke, which did not alarm the inhabitants, because they were familiarized to it; but on the present occasion, it shot forth flames, or globes of fire, which seemed to divide themselves into sparks, and were probably the burnt stones which the mountain threw out, or some other pieces of combustible matter. This appearance, which was very unusual, threw the Tlascalans into the greatest dejection, as the harbinger of future ills: they imagined those sparks which were scattered through the air, and did not fall down again into the volcano, to be the souls of tyrants come abroad to chastise the earth; and that their gods, when angry, made use of them as the instruments of their vengeance.

This wild fancy gained credit with Magiscatzin, and other persons of eminence in the republic, though their understandings were, in many respects, clear and extensive; and they were entertaining Cortez with their absurd notions, when Diego de Ordaz came to ask his leave to ascend the mountain, and take a nearer view of that great secret of nature. The Tlascalans were amazed at such a proposal, which they thought could only come from the mouth of a madman, or of a being conscious of his own immortality: and they endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, by representing the danger of such an attempt, saying, That the most valiant of their nation had only the boldness to visit some hermitages of their gods about the middle of the eminence, above which he would not find the mark of a human foot; nor were the tremblings to be endured, or the roarings, which forbid all approach to the top of the mountain.

This account of the difficulties of the undertaking, only inflamed the ardour of Ordaz; and Cortez yielded to his earnest solicitations, that the Tlascalans might see what they thought impossible, was not so to the courage of the Spaniards. He accordingly set out, accompanied by two soldiers of his company, and some Tlascalan officers, who stopt at the habitation of the hermits*. The Spaniards went on, climbing intrepidly up the rocks, and very often making use of hands as well as feet. But when they came within a small distance of the summit, where they felt the earth move under them, with violent and repeated rockings, and heard the tremendous roaring of the volcano, which discharged, with a still greater noise, a vast quantity of fire, the two soldiers desired to return. Ordaz, however, perceiving that the earthquake was now

* It is very remarkable, that, in all ages and nations, those who have aspired after the reputation of extraordinary sanctity, have always secluded themselves from the society of men, where only they can fulfil the ends of their being, and that they have generally chosen their abode in the neighbourhood of some awful appearance of nature. The conclusion is obvious.

over; that the noise lessened; and that the smoke came out less thick, encouraged them by his example to persevere. Advancing before them, he boldly went forward to the very mouth of the volcano, and looking down, observed at the bottom of the gulph, a great mass of liquid fire, whence he conjectured that the bowels of the mountain must abound in sulphur*. With this information he returned safe from his rash adventure, to the great joy of his countrymen, who had given him up for lost, and to the astonishment of the Tlascalans, whom this act of intrepidity inspired with still greater veneration for their new guests†.

Cortez was detained in Tlascala twenty days; partly in receiving the visits and the submissions of the neighbouring towns and tribes, and partly in complying with the humour of the inhabitants, who did every thing in their power to put off the departure of the Spaniards, by amusing them with festivals, public spectacles, dancing, and other feats of agility and address‡. At length the day for the march being fixed, a dispute arose, whether they should proceed by Cholula, a populous city attached to Montezuma, as has been already observed, or take a longer and less convenient route, rather than run any hazard. Cortez himself inclined to the former opinion; but the Tlascalans used all their influence to dissuade him from such a resolution, telling him that the city of Cholula, besides being filled with Mexican troops, had the reputation of being a place sacred to religion beyond any in that country, containing above four hundred temples, and such a troop of spiteful and vengeful gods as astonished all the world with their prodigies: and that more victims were slain there than even in Mexico itself, in order to appease the wrath of those tremendous deities. The Zempoallans now become less superstitious, through their acquaintance with the Spaniards, were little afraid of the anger of these gods, but repeated the reasons which they had formerly used for avoiding that city.

Before Cortez had come to any determination on this subject, new ambassadors arrived from Mexico, with another present, and advice that their sovereign would now suffer himself to be visited by the Spaniards; that he had provided quarters for them at Cholula, and every thing that could ren-

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iv. c. 5. De Solis, lib. iii. c. 4.

† This, however, was not the only advantage derived from an undertaking, which was branded, when proposed, with the name of wild curiosity. The army being in great want of powder, the second time that Cortez marched to Mexico, he recollected the report of Ordaz concerning this volcano; sent thither to seek for sulphur, and found great quantities, which proved so essential to the success of the expedition, by furnishing the Spaniards with the means of making gun powder, that the discoverer was rewarded for his temerity, by Charles V. and the action was ennobled by giving him the burning mountain for his arms. De Solis, ut supra.

‡ The Tlascalans were fond of music, both vocal and instrumental, dancing, and public spectacles of the theatrical kind, at which the women appeared in very gay apparel. Tennis and other games were in use among them; and one of their principal divinities was the Goddess of Love, whose festivals were celebrated with much pomp: Herrera, dec. II. lib. iv. c. 5. a circumstance contradictory to the general character of the Americans.

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der the journey agreeable and easy. A change so sudden in the councils of Montezuma, afforded room for suspicion that some stratagem was intended. Of this Cortez was sensible; yet it served only to confirm him in his resolution of taking the road of Cholula, lest by betraying any signs of fear or diffidence, he might inspire the Mexicans with courage, or awaken their caution. The Tlascalans did not hesitate to affirm, that treachery was at the bottom of Montezuma's insidious kindness; and therefore renewed their solicitations, that the general would avoid the snare by taking the route of Guajozingo, a country plentiful and secure: but Cortez, who affected to be alike superior to cunning and strength, laid before them such arguments in support of his opinion, that they at last acquiesced. Even Magilcatzin and Xicotencal applauded his magnanimity and judgment.

Before the Spaniards left Tlascala, Cortez was farther confirmed in his suspicions of Montezuma's insincerity, and of the treachery intended at Cholula. But he still determined to proceed by that city, for the reasons already urged, and in order that he might have an opportunity of trying his strength with the Mexicans, before he found himself inclosed in the heart of their empire: and on the morning he drew out his troops to begin his march, he found an army of Tlascalans in the field, whose officers had orders from the senate to obey his commands, and attend him not only to Cholula, but as far as Mexico, where they supposed would be the greatest danger of his undertaking. This army was very considerable. Some writers make it amount to an hundred thousand men: and it certainly consisted of the flower of the forces of the republic, whose whole strength was called forth on this occasion, in order to protect their new friends, and humble their ancient and most dangerous enemy.

Cortez thanked the Tlascalans for this proof of their affection; and after representing to the senate the inconveniencies consequent on the march of so large a body of men, especially when his intentions were pacific, he selected six thousand of the republic's troops, which joined to the Spaniards and Zempoallans formed the appearance of a regular army. The first day's march brought them to the banks of a river, within a league of Cholula; where Cortez chose rather to halt all night, than to enter so populous a place in the dark. Scarce had they taken the necessary precautions for their safety, when an embassy arrived from the city, with a present of provisions of various sorts, and excusing their ca- ziques for not waiting upon the general at Tlascala, as it was an enemy's country. They offered him quarters, when he should think proper to occupy them, and expressed the great joy which it gave the inhabitants of Cholula, to have an opportunity of entertaining strangers so amiable for their generosity, and so renowned for their valour: and next morning when he began his march, every thing seemed to indicate the sincerity of these professions. As he drew near the city, the priests met him with a numerous attendance of unarmed people, who welcomed him with such an appearance of respect and cordiality, as left no room for suspicion. But no sooner did they perceive the body of Tlascalans

calans that marched in the rear, than their countenances changed; a jealous murmur arose; and on inquiry, being made into its cause, they objected against admitting into their city enemies to their nation, and rebels against the imperial power. Cortez was somewhat uneasy at this demand, which, though perfectly reasonable, was not altogether consistent with his security; and he would have been farther embarrassed in complying with it, had not the Tlascalans voluntarily offered to take up their quarters without the city. The people of Cholula were immediately made acquainted with this proposal, to which they readily agreed, both nations remaining not only satisfied, but with some degree of vanity resulting from their mutual jealousy and opposition: the one party, because they persuaded themselves they had gained the superiority, by leaving their enemies discontented and ill accommodated; the other party, because they considered the refusal to admit them within the city, as a manifest acknowledgment that their antagonists stood in fear of their arms. Thus, as De Solis very justly observes, does the imagination of man vary the nature and appearances of things; which are generally valued as they are taken, and taken as we would have them*.

The entry of the Spaniards into Cholula, like that into Tlascala, was made amid a vast concourse of people, who rent the skies with their shouts, strewed the ground with flowers, and gave every possible demonstration of the most hearty reception; which, joined to the splendour and opulence of the place, removed all the apprehensions of the Spaniards. This city was delightfully situated in a plain, and supposed to contain twenty thousand inhabitants within the walls, and an equal number in the suburbs. It was much frequented by strangers; partly as the great sanctuary of the Mexican gods, and partly as the chief emporium of commerce. The streets were wide, and well laid out; the buildings larger, and of better architecture than those of Tlascala; and the prodigious number of temples gave it a magnificent appearance. The quarters provided for Cortez and his army were three or four spacious houses, contiguous to each other, which contained the Spaniards and Zempoallans, and where they could fortify themselves, if occasion required. The first three or four days, all was civility and quietness: the caziques were punctual in paying their respects to the general, and endeavoured to form an intimacy with his officers: provisions were liberally supplied; and every thing wore so favourable an aspect, that the most suspicious were disposed to believe they had been imposed upon by false and malicious insinuations:—so readily is the mind disposed, upon all occasions, to make itself easy.

But it was not long before the Spaniards were roused from their premature security, and the intimations of the Tlascalans appeared to deserve all the credit due to the sincerity with which they were offered. Montezuma's ambassadors, who had accompanied Cortez, were observed to hold frequent conferences with the priests; a suspicious joy was observable in the faces of the people; and all things gave signs of some deep, but ill-disguised design. The general took

* Hist. de las Conq. de Mexico, lib. iii. c. 5.

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every possible means to be informed of what was in agitation ; and an accident brought to light the important secret. Donna Marina having obtained the friendship, and the confidence of a Cholulan woman of rank, was advised by her to forsake those abominable strangers, and come to her house, where she should find entertainment and protection. This created suspicion in the breast of Marina, who with seeming gratitude accepted the offer ; on which the Cholulan lady, believing her sincere, discovered her whole heart ; telling her, That it was absolutely necessary she should immediately leave the Spanish quarters, as the time appointed for the destruction of the strangers was near, and it would be a pity that so valuable a woman should perish with them. Montezuma, she said, had provided twenty thousand chosen men, in order to make sure of the design ; that six thousand of those men had already been privately introduced, in small parties, into the city, and that the rest were posted at a short distance ; that arms had been plentifully distributed among the inhabitants, great quantities of stones carried up to the tops of the houses, and deep trenches cut across the streets, with sharp stakes fixed in the bottom, covered over at the top with earth, on slight supporters, that the horses might fall in and be wounded. The emperor, she added, had given directions, that all the strangers should be put to the sword, except a few, whom he desired might be sent alive to Mexico, in order to gratify his curiosity, and afterwards be offered in solemn sacrifice to his gods ; and that he had presented the citizens with a gold drum, curiously embossed, to excite them with more ardour to the enterprise.

This was intelligence of the utmost importance, and Marina lost no time in communicating it to Cortez. Under pretence of carrying off her jewels and other valuable effects, she went immediately to the general's quarters ; laid the whole before him ; and returned soon enough to have her informer and patroness secured without the smallest disturbance, or the most distant suspicion that the conspiracy was detected. On examination, after a few threats, the Cholulan lady not only confirmed the information of Marina, but added many other particulars. These were corroborated by the arrival of two Tlascalcan soldiers, who had entered the city in disguise, and told Cortez from their commanders, That he must take care of himself, as they had observed the inhabitants carrying off their women and goods by night to the neighbouring villages ; an infallible sign that some plot was hatching : that they likewise understood, that a sacrifice of ten children had been offered that morning in the great temple of Cholula ; a rite never used, except on the eve of some hostile undertaking.

Cortez was now fully satisfied of the stratagem laid by the Cholulans for his ruin, and resolved upon signal vengeance ; but in order to justify his proceedings to the Mexican ambassadors, he wished to make it evident by more considerable witnesses. For this purpose, he ordered the chief priests to be called, and examined them separately ; not as one who doubted their friendship, but who was fully informed of their perfidy. Unacquainted with the means by which he acquired his information, they imagined they were talking to some deity, who penetrated the secrets of men's hearts, and immediately confessed the conspiracy, with

with all its circumstances; blaming Montezuma, by whose commands, they affirmed, every thing was disposed and provided. Cortez ordered them to be privately confined, and assembled his officers, to deliberate on the measures necessary to be pursued in such a critical situation. They referred every thing to his prudence, and he was not long in resolving what course he should pursue. He sent for the city caziques, and publishing his march for next day, demanded a supply of provisions, Tamemes to carry his baggage, and a certain number of armed men, after the example of the Zempoallans and Tlascalans; all which were readily granted. He gave the Tlascalan officers notice of these particulars, with instructions how to proceed; that at the first appearance of morning, they should draw near to the city with their troops, as if moving to follow the march, and on the first discharge of the fire-arms, break into the town, in order to join the army. He also took care, that the Spaniards and Zempoallans should hold themselves in readiness, and be informed of the business in which they were to be employed.

These steps being taken, and the quarters secured, as soon as it was night, by such guards as an occasion so alarming rendered necessary, Cortez sent for the Mexican ambassadors, and under an appearance of friendship and confidence, told them, That he had discovered a dangerous conspiracy, formed against himself and his followers, by the citizens of Cholula; informing them of the particulars, and representing in the strongest terms, how much these people were wanting to the laws of hospitality, the peace established, and the word of their sovereign; and he added, That he had not only come to the knowledge of this conspiracy, by his own speculation and vigilance, but the principal conspirators had even confessed it, excusing their treachery, by a greater crime; that they had the boldness to say, they had received their orders from Montezuma, though he could not believe so great a prince capable of a thought so mean and base; for which reason he had resolved to inflict punishment for the offence with the utmost rigour of his arms: that he communicated this intelligence to them, that they might be apprised of his motives, and understand that he was not so much offended at the Cholulans for the crime committed against himself, as for the colouring they made use of, in sheltering their treachery under the emperor's name. The ambassadors pretended, that they knew nothing of any such conspiracy, and endeavoured to save the credit of their sovereign by following the path which Cortez had purposely chalked out for them, in order to lessen the force of his complaint.

It was not thought prudent at that time publicly to accuse Montezuma, and make a powerful prince, who seemed inclined to dissemble, an open enemy. For which reason it was resolved to defeat his designs, without making him sensible that they were discovered, by punishing his perfidy in the persons of those he employed: and Cortez secretly esteemed this conspiracy a fortunate occurrence, notwithstanding the danger with which it was accompanied, as it would afford him an opportunity of raising the reputation of his arms among the Mexicans, and of striking terror into Montezuma and his court, by the severity of his revenge.

Early next morning the Cholulan supplies arrived; when it was instantly observed that the Tamemes were fewer, and the armed men greater in number than had been desired. By introducing these concealed enemies, amounting to near three thousand, among the Spaniards, the Cholulans hoped to carry their perfidious purpose more effectually into execution; and Cortez accepted them, as he wanted to divide the enemy, and to have in his power a part of the traitors whom he designed to chastise. They were divided into small parties, under pretence of being incorporated with the Spaniards, and afterwards confined, in different squares, under a guard.

Having made these dispositions, and issued out the proper instructions, Cortez mounted his horse, and ordering the city caziques to be brought before him, told them, that now their base designs were discovered, and their punishment fixed. Their confusion sufficiently declared their guilt; and the Spaniards, as its reward, instantly fell upon the Cholulans confined in the squares, putting them all to the sword, except such as escaped by getting over the walls. At the same time the Tlascalans entered the city, agreeable to the signal, and made dreadful slaughter. Nor were the Cholulans idle. Perceiving that they were now engaged in open hostilities, they called in to their assistance the remainder of the Mexican troops; and forming a junction in a great square, in which stood three or four large temples, they filled the towers and porches with armed men, and threatened a resistance which could only be surmounted by setting fire to the buildings, and playing off the artillery upon them. This was effected by the Spaniards with admirable address, while the Tlascalans furiously attacked the rear of the enemy. The same method was practised at other temples, to which the people fled, as the strongest defences. The general afterwards went through the whole city; and slew or drove out both the Mexicans and inhabitants, till he gained entire possession of the place, and blood ceased to flow for want of enemies. More than six thousand dead bodies were found in the streets and temples; the conspiracy was entirely defeated; the Cholulans were severely punished for their treacherous project; the valour of the Spaniards was fully established among the Mexicans; and the Tlascalans were not only pleased with the destruction of their enemies, but enriched with plunder: especially in salt, to them the most inestimable booty, and which they immediately sent home in great quantities*.

Notwithstanding these beneficial consequences, which justify the Spanish general in the eye of politicians, his conduct on this occasion has been deservedly blamed by the friends of humanity. The chastisement inflicted on the Cholulans was certainly severe beyond the measure of the offence, and is therefore reprehensible: but the situation of Cortez made severity necessary; and his clemency, after the conspiracy was defeated, vindicates him sufficiently from the imputation of wanton cruelty. He ordered the prisoners, both Mexicans and Cholulans, to be brought before him, in presence of the chief

priests, now released from their confinement, the Cholulan lady, and the ambassadors of Montezuma; when, apologizing for the rigour of the punishment, by enlarging on the atrocity of the crime, and the danger to which he was exposed, he assured them that he had laid aside his displeasure; published a general pardon; released all the prisoners; and made it his request, that the caziques would invite the natives to return to their former habitations, as if nothing extraordinary had happened. He likewise obliged the Tlascalans to restore all the booty they had taken, except the salt: and this behaviour gained so much credit to his professions, that the city was in a short time filled with people; the Cholulans returning with their families, opening their shops, and exercising their several employments, in perfect confidence and security, amid those very men, who had a few hours before destroyed the habitations of their gods, massacred their relations and fellow-citizens, and whose hands were yet red with blood*!

The day after this action, Xicotencal arrived with an army of twenty thousand men; which, upon the first notice of hostilities, the republic of Tlascala had sent to the assistance of the Spaniards. They halted without the city, and were there visited and entertained by Cortez, who thanked them in the warmest manner for their zeal, but declined their services; telling Xicotencal, that now their aid was not necessary for the reduction of Cholula, and having resolved to march in a few days towards Mexico, it would be imprudent to awaken the jealousy of Montezuma, by bringing into his dominions so large a body of Tlascalans, the declared enemies of that prince. Xicotencal and his officers readily admitted the justice of these reasons; and, before their departure, Cortez endeavoured to reconcile the Tlascalans and Cholulans. By his address he subdued the ancient animosity subsisting between the two nations, and set on foot a treaty of peace, which was acceded to by both parties; the act of confederacy and alliance being celebrated in presence of the magistrates of both cities, with the ceremonies and solemnities usually observed on such occasions by the natives of New Spain†. This method of uniting the affections of the nations he had conquered, and engaging them all in his own interest, was one of the finest strokes of the policy of Cortez. By the present mediation he opened the way for supplies from Tlascala, and likewise secured a retreat, should circumstances turn out to his disadvantage.

Having completed this negotiation, and concerted the plan of his future operations, Cortez gave leave to some Zempoallans, who desired it, to return home; sending by them letters to Juan de Escalante, governor of Villa Rica, with an account of the progress of the army, and advising him to strengthen the town by new fortifications. He likewise sent a present to the cazique of Zempoalla, recommending to his attention the Spaniards left in that neighbourhood; and thinking every thing secure behind him, in consequence of these precautions, he was making preparations for continuing his march, when another embassy arrived from Montezuma. That prince was desirous to efface from the

* Id. *ibid.* Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 1.

† Ut *supra*.

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minds of the Spaniards every suspicion of his having any concern in the conspiracy at Cholula. The ambassadors accordingly thanked Cortez for having chastised that treacherous people as they deserved; enlarging on the emperor's indignation at their perfidy, and solemnly protesting his ignorance of such design, every word of which the Spaniards knew to be false, though they prudently concealed their sentiments.

This message was accompanied with a magnificent present, intended to lull Cortez into security, and draw him into another ambuscade, of which he had notice on his march. The cazique of Guacocingo, in whose jurisdiction the Spaniards took up their quarters the first night, informed the general, that on the other side of the mountain of Chalco, over which he must pass with his army, the Mexicans had placed a great number of men in ambush; had stopped up the royal road, which leads from the summit of the mountain to the province of the same name, with great stones and trees; and had opened and smoothed, at the top of the height, another road, which would lead the Spaniards into an impracticable pass, where both horse and foot would be entangled in snares, and attacked when they were in no condition to defend themselves. From this chief Cortez also learned, that the heart of the empire was no better affected to Montezuma than the extreme provinces; a discovery which confirmed all his former hopes, and inspired him with the most sanguine expectations of subverting a government, whose vital parts were distempered, and whose strength was impaired and divided.

Next day the Spaniards continued their march with ardour; and when they came to the place where the two roads separated, after a fatiguing journey up the steep ascent, Cortez asked the Mexican ambassadors, who were near his person, what these two roads meant. They answered, that the best was levelled for the convenience of his troops; the other being stopped up, as more craggy and difficult. "You are but little acquainted with my people," replied Cortez, without hesitation or change of countenance:—"they will march in this way which you have blocked up, for no other reason than its difficulty; for the Spaniards, whenever they have it in their choice, always incline to that which is attended with most toil and danger." Having uttered these words, he ordered his Indian guides to march foremost, and remove the obstacles to his passage; leaving the ambassadors in admiration of his sagacity, and overawed at his gallantry, which they, not suspecting the stratagem of their master was discovered, believed to be guided by some divinity*.

The Mexicans in ambuscade, on the other hand, no sooner perceived the Spaniards pursuing the royal road, than they took it for granted that their design was betrayed, and began to retire in as much consternation and disorder, as if they had been overcome in battle. Cortez therefore continued his march, without further interruption; and in descending the mountain, the vast plain of Mexico gradually opened to the view of the army, and presented them with

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 8.

one of the most striking and beautiful prospects on the face of the earth. When they first beheld this land of promise, which they flattered themselves would yield an ample recompence for all their services and sufferings; when they observed fertile and cultivated fields, stretching farther than the eye could reach; when they saw a lake resembling the sea in extent, encompassed with large towns, and discovered the capital city rising on an island in the middle, adorned with its temples and turrets! the scene so far exceeded their imagination, that some believed the fanciful descriptions of romance realized, and that its enchanted palaces and gilded domes were presented to their sight, while others could hardly persuade themselves that this wonderful spectacle was any thing more than a gay vision*.

Meanwhile the haughty spirit of Montezuma, broke by repeated disappointments, fluctuated between contending opinions and passions, and at length delivered him up to a cruel devotion, which sacrificed hecatombs of human victims at the altars of his gods, in order to appease their supposed resentment. The contradictory oracles uttered by his idols entirely disordered his imagination; some admonishing him to open his gates to the strangers, that he might thereby have them all for a sacrifice, while others advised him to keep them at a distance, and endeavour to destroy them without endangering his person. To the latter advice he most inclined; and the failure of his last ambush, undertaken in consequence of it, almost drove him to madness, and silenced at once his oracles and counsellors. In this extremity, he had recourse to the magicians and sorcerers, a set of men in the highest estimation at Mexico. He assembled them in a body, ordered them to take the field, and either put the Spaniards to flight, or stupify them by the force of their enchantments, so that they might become an easy conquest. If they succeeded, they were to be rewarded with uncommon bounty; but if they failed, he threatened to punish them with death, as impostors. The magicians, afraid to discover the cheat with which they had so long deluded the public, set out in troops, in order to amuse their sovereign; and after many mysterious, but harmless rites, returned with a story evidently contrived to screen themselves from punishment and disgrace. They affirmed, that a frightful form had appeared to them, and declared that their conjurations were now of no avail, Mexico being forsaken by the gods. Montezuma remained for a time speechless, as if lost in deep thought, then turning his eyes on the magicians, and such of his courtiers as were present, "What can we do," said he, "if our gods forsake us?—Let the strangers come, and the heavens fall upon us: to hide our heads, or turn our backs upon misfortune, would be dishonourable. I only lament the old men, women, and children, who cannot defend themselves:"—a reflection which shews the natural elevation of his mind, and that his cruel heart still retained some sentiments of humanity †. From this

* Castillo, c. 86. The words employed in this description are nearly those of Dr. Robertson, who has translated Castillo almost literally, but with much elegance and happiness of expression.

† Id. *ibid*.

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moment the emperor and his whole court began to make preparations for entertaining the Spaniards, believing them to be those eastern people mentioned in their traditions; and in consequence of such a mode of thinking, another embassy, more splendid than any of the former, was dispatched to Cortez, headed by prince Cacumatzin, nephew to Montezuma, and prince of Tezeuco.

By this time the Spaniards had descended from the mountain of Chalco, and advanced as far as Amemeca, through a delightful country, filled with groves and gardens, which bespoke alike the bounty of nature and the force of culture. Here the general halted, at a village built on a creek of the great lake, and received the compliments of the adjacent caziques, who appeared exceedingly reserved before the Mexican ambassadors, but in private freely declared their detestation of the royal tyrant, whom they taxed with cruelty and oppression; adding with tears, that they were forced to surrender their women as a tribute to his lust, and that of his ministers, who chose and rejected them at pleasure: nor were the arms of a mother any security to a daughter, or the nuptial bed a protection to a wife. At this place the army was encamped, when prince Cacumatzin arrived, attended by four of the first grandees of Mexico, and carried in a chair or pavillion of state, covered with plumage of the most beautiful colours ingeniously disposed, and supported by the shoulders of some officers of his family. When he alighted, a crowd of attendants ran before him to clear and sweep the way, and Cortez received him at the door of his apartment, having adorned himself as usual on such occasions. After the proper compliments were over, the prince took his seat with an easy majestic air, and spoke with the composure of a man, who could contemplate novelty without surprise. He began his discourse with welcoming Cortez and the Spanish officers to the Mexican dominions, acquainting them of the amicable disposition in which the emperor expected their visit, and how much he desired to establish a firm and lasting friendship with the powerful eastern prince whom they acknowledged as their master, and whose power Montezuma was obliged to confess, for certain reasons which they should learn from his own lips: and he concluded with apologies for the difficulties which Cortez must encounter in his way to Mexico on account of the scarcity of provisions, the people being in great want by reason of that year's barrenness, representing in the strongest terms the concern which this circumstance gave Montezuma; in a word, he spoke in such a manner as if he would dissuade the Spaniards from the journey, at the same time that he invited them.

Cortez, who easily penetrated the design of this speech, replied in that resolute and mysterious manner which he had constantly maintained on such occasions, That the king his master, the greatest monarch in the other world, where the sun rises, had likewise some reasons of high import for offering his friendship to Montezuma; that the Spaniards despised hunger and every other inconveniency, when acting in obedience to the will of their sovereign; and that he most thankfully accepted the emperor's permission to deliver his embassy, without being the
least

least in pain about the scarcity of provisions. Such an answer convinced Cacuatzin, that all attempts to divert the general from his resolution would be to no purpose, he therefore waved the subject; and having received some presents from Cortez, accompanied the army as far as Tezeuco, the capital of his dominions, whence he proceeded to Mexico to report the issue of his visit.

The Spaniards were equally delighted and astonished at the grandeur of Tezeuco, the second city in the empire for size, and the first for antiquity. The front of all the buildings was extended on the margin of the great lake, in a happy situation, where the causeway of Mexico began. Over this causeway Cortez pursued his march, without stopping at Tezeuco; his design being to reach Iztacpalapa that night, whence he could march with ease to Mexico next day. The causeway was here about twenty feet in breadth, built with large stones cemented with lime, and adorned with works that served the double purpose of strength and ornament. About half way between Tezeuco and Iztacpalapa stood another town, of about two thousand houses, called Quitlavaca; to which the Spaniards gave the name of Venezuela, or little Venice, because like that city, it rose out of the waters. The cazique came out with a considerable retinue to meet Cortez, and desired that he would honour his town with a visit: a request which was urged with so much earnestness, that Cortez thought proper to comply; partly to avoid disobliging the cazique, and partly that he might have an opportunity of observing the situation of the lake, the cities, causeways, and every thing that could either facilitate or obstruct his march, should the Mexicans resolve to cut down the bridges.

Quitlavaca commands a view of the greater part of the lake of Mexico, a prospect enchantingly beautiful, being diversified with cities, towns, paved ways, and vessels in perpetual motion. Towers and pinnacles, to the eye of the Spaniards, seemed to float upon the waters, and trees and gardens to flourish out of their proper element!—a sight which at once raised their astonishment, and fired their ambition. The army was abundantly supplied with provisions by the cazique, and well accommodated with quarters. The general and his officers were entertained with affability and politeness; every action being performed with an ease and elegance, which shewed that the people partook of the manners of a court, and were polished by their vicinity to the capital. But what pleased Cortez more than every thing else was, to find the cazique of Quitlavaca possess the same sentiments as the other chiefs of the country, through which he had passed, in regard to the government of Montezuma*. They all detested his tyranny; but they dreaded his power: and although they shewed an inclination to break their fetters, and receive the Spaniards as persons destined for their deliverance, yet so habituated were they to slavery, and so often had they bled under the scourge of his authority, that they could scarce elevate their souls to the pleasing prospect of liberty. Perhaps they imagined, from a certain foreboding which the mind sometimes has of future calamities, that the strangers

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 9.

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would only deliver them from the yoke of Montezuma, in order to subject them, as actually happened, to a still more rigorous bondage.

Having spent the night agreeably at Quitlavaca, Cortez, animated with fresh hopes, began his march by break of day, along the same causeway which had conducted him to that place, and which was wide enough for eight horsemen to go abreast. The army, now consisting of about four hundred and fifty Spaniards, and six thousand Americans, Tlascalans, Zempoallans, and other confederates, reached Iztacpalapa, where they designed to halt, without any remarkable adventure. This place surpassed any thing the Spaniards had yet seen in the magnificence of its buildings; many of which were superb edifices, stretching along the margin of the lake in a delicious and fertile soil. The cazique came out to meet Cortez, accompanied by the lords of some neighbouring towns, all attended by numerous retinues, with presents of fruit and provisions. The entry of the army into the city was announced by such loud and general acclamations of joy, as evinced the good-will of the inhabitants. The Spaniards were lodged in the cazique's palace, and the Indian auxiliaries in courts and squares, covered over with cotton cloths, where they could securely and commodiously pass the night. The apartments in the palace were adorned or hung with paintings on cotton, ingeniously executed, and roofed with cedar. The town was watered with many fountains, conveyed by a variety of aqueducts from the neighbouring mountains, through a number of large and well cultivated gardens. Among these gardens there was one peculiarly spacious and elegant, into which the cazique conducted the Spaniards, and which would have reflected honour upon the taste of a people more advanced in the polite arts*.

Much delighted with the beauties of Iztacpalapa, and sufficiently informed of the strength of the place and the disposition of the inhabitants, Cortez set out early next morning for Mexico, in order that he might have leisure to reconnoitre the city, and fortify his quarters, after paying his respects to Montezuma. When he had marched about half way, he was met by four thousand persons of distinction, sent to receive the strangers, and conduct them to the capital. On drawing near to the city, they found a stone fortification, secured by a tower on

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 2. De Solis, lib. iii. c. 10. The Spanish historians are accused, and perhaps justly, of exaggerating the improvements of the Mexicans and Peruvians: but as they are our only authorities, we are obliged either to follow them, or to reject their accounts as altogether fabulous. The last would be a dangerous degree of scepticism, as it would affect the credibility of the whole history: we must therefore admit such accounts, with some abatement; and when we come to consider the ancient state of Mexico and Peru, an attempt will be made to ascertain the progress which the people of these two American empires had made in the arts, both useful and ornamental; from which inquiry will appear, the degree of credit that is due to the pompous descriptions of their improvements.—This observation the reader is desired to keep particularly in mind, in reading the account of the city of Mexico; and if the author might be allowed a bold remark, he would say, that the whole fallacy of the Spanish historians (who were either eye-witnesses of what they describe, or had their information from such as were) consists in that strong impression which new and unexpected objects make upon the mind, and that warmth of glowing with which we naturally describe them. The picture resembles the original; but, like the portrait of a favourite mistress, drawn by the pencil of a lover, the beauties are heightened and the defects concealed.



Reynolds

The Public Entry of CORTÉZ & his Companions, into MEXICO.

each side, and which took up the whole breadth of the causeway. This obliged the troops to make a circuit to gates that opened in another part of the causeway, terminated by a draw-bridge, which, together with a second fortification, defended the entrance of the city. The Mexicans passed over the bridge; then dividing and falling back, made a lane for the Spaniards, who thence discovered a large street, with uniform buildings, and windows and battlements crowded with spectators. Soon after appeared the first company of the royal procession, consisting of about two hundred noblemen in an uniform dress, adorned with large plumes, alike in fashion and colour. They advanced in two files, with remarkable silence and composure, bare footed, and with their eyes fixed on the ground. When they approached the Spaniards, they divided and fell back in the same order as the former company, and a more numerous and splendid train was discovered at a distance; in the midst of which came Montezuma, carried on the shoulders of his favourites, in a chair or litter of gold and feathers, curiously wrought. Four persons of chief distinction followed this conveyance, supporting over him a canopy of green feathers, interwoven with silver; and before him walked three officers, with rods of gold in their hands, which they exalted at certain intervals, as a signal of the emperor's approach, that all passengers might prostrate themselves on the earth, nor presume to lift up their eyes, which was deemed a kind of sacrilege. Cortez, who was on horseback, dismounted when he drew near: Montezuma alighted from his chair, at the same time; his attendants officiously spreading carpets on the street, that the royal feet might not touch the ground. He advanced to meet Cortez with a slow solemn pace, leaning on the arms of his nephews, the princes of Iztacpalapa and Tezeuco. By way of apparel he wore a mantle of the finest cotton, loaded with gold, pearls, and precious stones, in such profusion, that it seemed rather an encumbrance than an ornament. It was laid carelessly on his shoulders, and swept the ground with its length. On his head he wore a light crown of gold, in form of a mitre; and his feet were cased in shoes of the same metal, with spangled straps that came round part of his leg, in the manner of the Roman military sandals. His presence was majestic; his stature of the middle size; his age about forty; his constitution rather delicate than robust; his complexion fair for the climate and race of men; his nose aquiline; his eyes lively and piercing; and his features regular and handsome. Cortez approached him with the most profound reverence, making obeisance after the manner of his country; which Montezuma answered by laying his hand upon the ground, and raising it afterwards to his lips. This mode of salutation was common in Mexico, but chiefly from inferiors to superiors, and was considered as such an uncommon act of condescension in a proud prince, who scarcely deigned to consider the rest of mankind as belonging to the same species with himself, that all his subjects instantly believed the strangers assuredly beings of a nature superior to humanity. During these compliments, Cortez threw round the emperor's neck a chain of cut glass, curiously set, in imitation of diamonds, which he had put above his coat of mail, as a present for the first audience. Montezuma's at-

tendants would have prevented him, it not being lawful to approach so near the sovereign ; but that prince himself reprimanded them, and was so much pleased with the present, that he ordered two of the gentlemen of his bed chamber to bring a collar of red shells, set together with the nicest art, and adorned with eight crabs of beaten gold, which exactly imitated nature. This was reckoned among the most valuable of the royal jewels ; and the emperor, with his own hands, suspended it round the general's neck, to the astonishment of the Mexicans, who were farther confirmed, by this second instance of respect, in their belief of the celestial origin of the strangers. Accordingly, as the Spaniards passed through the crowd, they frequently heard themselves denominated Teules, or divinities. When they came to the place provided for their quarters, Montezuma took Cortez by the hand, led him into a spacious room, and placing him on a rich elevated seat, ornamented with gold and precious stones, " You are now," said he, " in your own house with your friends ; eat, rest, and be happy. I will visit you soon." The general made him a profound obeisance, in answer to this courtly speech ; and the emperor returned to his palace with the same state in which he had left it*.

Thus by a train of circumstances, no less unexpected than singular, had Cortez been enabled to penetrate into the heart of a great and powerful empire, and was now lodged in its capital ; but the chief object of his armament, the subjection of this empire to the crown of Spain, was still, in some respects, as remote as ever. Instead of entering Mexico as an enemy, he had not only met with no opposition, but been received there as a friend : he could see no colourable pretext for commencing hostilities, nor any possibility of accomplishing his designs, without a violation of the sacred rights of hospitality. Time and fortune, however, prepared the occasions, and he was not slow in seizing them.

C H A P. V.

The Proceedings of Cortez and his Followers, from their public Entry into the City of Mexico, to the Death of Montezuma.

THE Spaniards entered the capital of the Mexican empire on the 8th day of November, in the year 1519. The place provided as their quarters was one of the royal palaces, built by Axayaca, the father of Montezuma. It was surrounded by a thick stone wall, with towers on the flanks, in the manner of a fortification, and was so large as to contain the whole army. The first care of Cortez was to take a full survey of it, that he might the better provide for the distribution of the guards, and the planting of the artillery.

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 2. De Solis, lib. iii. c. 10.

These he so disposed as to command the different avenues, posting centinels at proper stations, and taking every other precaution that vigilance can suggest to valour.

It was a little past mid-day when the army entered these quarters, which were no less calculated for internal conveniency than external defence, an hundred and fifty Spaniards being able to lie in separate beds, after room was left for the rest, both Spaniards and Indians, amounting to upwards of six thousand, to lodge in a military form, and apartments reserved for public purposes. Here Cortez and his officers found a sumptuous banquet prepared for them, and great plenty of provisions, though less delicate, for the soldiers. In the evening, according to promise, came Montezuma to visit the general, with the same pomp and solemnity as at their first interview. Cortez went out to receive him in the principal square of the palace, with all the respect due to such a favour, accompanying him as far as the door of his apartment, where he made the emperor a profound obeisance. Montezuma passed him, and took his seat with an air of negligence and majesty, commanding a chair to be brought for Cortez, and making a signal for his attendants to retire to a distance. The general did the same in regard to his officers, and was going to open his embassy, when Montezuma signified, that he had somewhat to offer before he gave him audience, and is said to have spoke to the following effect.

“ Illustrious captain, and gallant stranger, before you deliver the embassy of the great prince who sent you, both you and I must pass by, and bury in oblivion, what fame hath reported of our persons and conduct, abusing our ears with idle rumors, which prepossess us against truth, and render her obscure by the disguises of flattery and slander. By some you have no doubt been told, that I am one of the immortal gods, extolling my power and my person to the heavens; by others, that the business of fortune is to enrich me, that the walls and the coverings of my palace are gold, and that the earth groans beneath the weight of my treasures: you have heard that I am a tyrant, cruel and proud, abhorring justice, and a stranger to mercy; but both accounts are equally false. This arm,” uncovering a scar, “ will make you sensible that I am mortal, and that you talk to a being of the same species with other men. My riches, I own, are great, but not what they are represented by my vassals. The house wherein you now lodge is one of my palaces: behold the walls made of stone and lime! ordinary materials, which owe their value to art. From these representations, therefore, imagine how likely it is that my tyrannies have been exaggerated in the same manner, or at least suspend your judgment till you enter into my reasons; and lay no stress on the accusations brought against me by my rebellious subjects, before you have informed yourself, whether what they call tyranny be not chastisement, and if any one can complain of my severity, without having deserved it.

“ After the same manner have we received information concerning your nature and actions. Some have told us you are gods; that the wild beasts obey you; that you grasp the thunder, and command the elements: others have reported that

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that you are malicious, revengeful, proud, slaves to your passions, and transported with an insatiable thirst of the gold which our country produces; but now I perceive you are of the same composition and form with the rest of mankind, though distinguished from us by some accidents, which the difference of country occasions. Those creatures so alarming, and of which fame has reported such wonders, are no more I find than large deer that you have taught to obey you, and instructed in such imperfect knowledge as is consistent with animal instinct. Your arms, which counterfeit lightning, I conceive to be produced by human ingenuity, or by that mysterious art known amongst us under the name of magic, and to be less destructive than they seem. As to what regards yourselves, I am informed by my ambassadors and servants, that you are courteous and devout; that your resentments are founded on reason; that you bear hardships cheerfully; and among your other virtues, they discover liberality, which rarely accompanies avarice. We must therefore, on both sides, forget all past misrepresentations, and be thankful to our eyes for correcting our opinions. Taking this for granted, we would have you to understand, before you begin your discourse, that we are not ignorant, nor stand in need of your persuasions to believe, that the great prince whom you obey, is descended from our ancestor Quezalcoal, lord of the seven caves of the Navatlaques, and lawful king of those seven nations, which gave a beginning to the Mexican empire. By a tradition for many ages preserved in our annals, and revered as sacred, we know that he departed these regions to conquer new countries in the East; leaving a promise, that, in process of time, his descendants should return to model our laws, and reform our government. This tradition is supported by prophecies, long regarded as infallible, and which are confirmed by your appearance; and as you not only carry the marks foretold in these prophecies, but the prince of the East, who sends you, manifests in your actions the greatness of so illustrious a progenitor, we have already determined, that all things shall be done for his honour, to the utmost of our ability. This I have thought fit to notify, that you may declare what you have to propose, without any constraint, and attribute my condescension to so noble a cause*."

This artful speech was delivered with an air of majesty, and Cortez answered it with equal dignity and address. He endeavoured to maintain the opinion of the extraordinary valour of the Spaniards without departing from truth. He acknowledged that the fire-arms, which the Mexicans mistook for lightning and thunder, were the invention of human genius; but lest Montezuma, from this very circumstance, to judge of the superiority of the Spaniards in contrivance and understanding: he told him that the horses were not deer, as he imagined, but animals of a more generous nature, bold, furious, and ambitious of emulating the glory of their masters; and in order to give greater weight to his embassy, he politically endeavoured to confirm that idea which Montezuma had formed concerning the origin of the Spaniards, and the authority of the Catholic

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 11. Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 2.

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king; execrating the impious religion of the Mexicans, and giving a short sketch of the principal tenets of the Christian faith; to establish which, he added, was the chief object of his commission, and the supreme wish of the great prince his master. "That king," exclaimed he, "whose ancient superiority you acknowledge, exhorts you to hear me on this subject with an unprejudiced mind, that you may taste of that repose which your spirit will find in truth; and as the most effectual method of perpetuating, by a lasting amity, founded on the solid basis of religion, the confederacy between the two crowns." Montezuma listened to all his arguments without the least mark of conviction; and rising from his seat with a careless air, "I accept," said he, addressing himself to Cortez, "with the warmest acknowledgments, the friendship and confederacy which you propose from the great descendant of Quezalcoal: but all gods are good; and yours may be what you say, without any offence to mine. Repose yourselves now, for you must be weary; and rest assured, that you shall be served with all the respect due to your valour, and to the illustrious monarch who sends you." Having uttered these words, he ordered some of his attendants in waiting to approach with some pieces of gold, cotton cloths, and curiosities in feathers, which he presented to Cortez and his officers, before he withdrew*. Montezuma seemed to regard the Spaniards, at this interview, with a kind of mixed satisfaction, in which might be discovered the effects of his former disquiet; in the same manner as the violence of the storm may be perceived in the rolling of the waves, after its rage has subsided.

Next day Cortez desired an audience of the emperor, which was readily granted. He went attended by four of his principal officers, and six or seven favourite soldiers, among whom was Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who though an illiterate man, had already begun to collect materials for his history. The streets were filled with people, who crowded to see the strangers, and the Spaniards heard, to their no small satisfaction, the word *Teules*, or divinities, frequently repeated, as on their first appearance; a certain proof that the veneration of the Mexicans was undiminished. At a considerable distance appeared the palace of Montezuma, which sufficiently demonstrated the magnificence of the Mexican monarchs. The pile was so large, that it opened by thirty gates to as many different streets. The principal front took up one whole side of a spacious parade, and was built of jasper finely polished, and of different colours. Over the great gate was the imperial arms, pompously blazoned. Here Cortez was received with much ceremony by the officers of the court; and after being conducted through three extensive squares, he reached at length the apartments of Montezuma, where he found equal reason to admire the grandeur of the rooms, and the richness of the furniture. The floors were covered with a variety of different mats of beautiful workmanship and texture; the walls, with cotton hangings finely painted; and the innermost room was adorned with a kind of tapestry, made of the plumage of birds, formed into pictures, with most elegant shades,

* *Id. ibid.*

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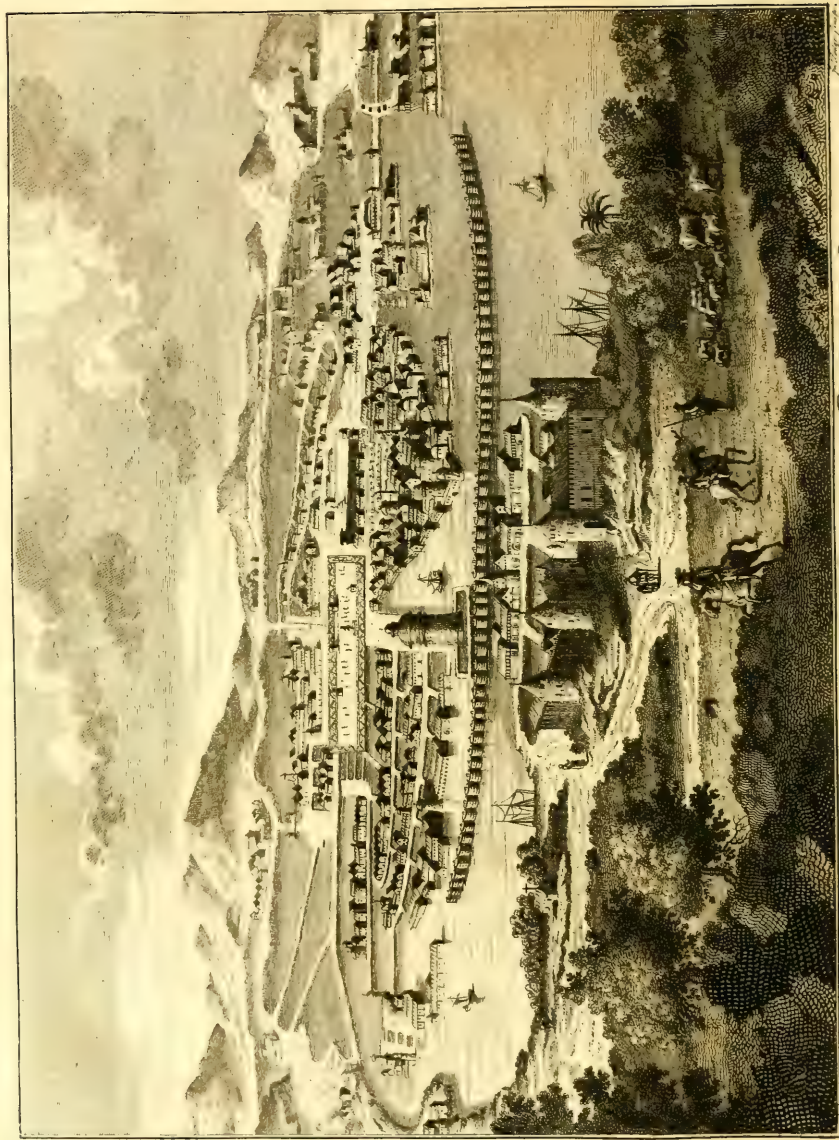
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and disposed in such order as to form the most agreeable harmony of colours. The roofs were of cedar and other odoriferous woods, with different foliages and relievos, that discovered taste and genius in the artists; and what was very remarkable in this building, large ceilings were formed without the use of nails, the timber-work being so contrived as to support them, by the pressure of the lateral on the central parts. Every thing was new and extraordinary to the Spaniards, which greatly contributed to encrease their respect for the owner. The grandeur of the palace; the ceremonious attendance of crowds of officers; the richness of their apparel; and even the profound silence observed by so numerous a train, all impressed the imagination with the most exalted ideas of the power of Montezuma, and the wealth of the Mexican empire.

That prince was standing in the midst of all the ensigns of his authority, when, observing Cortez, he advanced to receive him, laying his hands familiarly on his shoulders, and saluting the rest of the Spaniards with a gracious nod and smile; then seating himself, he desired Cortez to do the same, and all those who accompanied him. The visit was long, and the conversation such as might be supposed to pass between friends on a footing of perfect equality. Montezuma divested himself of all the pomp of majesty, without losing sight of his dignity, and condescended to question Cortez concerning the nature, politics, and curiosities of the eastern countries. All his replies evinced strong sense, and many of his observations a manly and extensive understanding. He next touched upon the obligations of the Mexicans to the descendants of their first monarch, and expressed his particular satisfaction, that the prophecy concerning the reformation to be made by strangers was completed in his time; a compliment as void of sincerity as any that could have passed in the most polished European court, and no less genteel. Cortez, who was likewise a master in this science, artfully drew on the conversation to the topic of religion, though all his arguments, on that subject, proved fruitless; except in regard to the barbarous custom of decking the royal table with dishes of human flesh, which Montezuma ordered henceforth to be disused. But as to the point of human sacrifices, on which Cortez pressed him with much warmth, he said, he could see no cruelty in offering to the gods prisoners taken in battle, and who by the laws of war were already condemned to die: nor did he by any means approve of the maxim laid down in Scripture, to extend neighbourly affection towards an enemy. In a word, though he seemed to approve of the benevolence and humanity of the Christian system, in certain particulars, he constantly returned to his old assertion, That his gods were good in Mexico, as the Christian God might be in the East.

Montezuma, in adhering so strenuously to the religion of his country, was not influenced merely by motives of piety. He looked upon the basis of the royal authority to be laid in the absurd superstition of the people, and their reverence for the priests, with whom it would be dangerous to have any altercation on a topic in which their interest, influence, and character, were so deeply concerned. He dreaded their displeasure, and the contempt of his vassals, should he relax his

zeal



A VIEW of the CITY of MEXICO.

real for the worship of his gods, out of complaisance to the strangers : and he had also a vanity, it appears, in the magnificence of his temples, which led him, soon after this conversation, to display them to Cortez, accompanied by father Olmedo, and some principal officers and favourite soldiers.

When the Spaniards came to the entrance of the great temple, Montezuma desired them to halt, and went forward in person to consult the priests, Whether it was lawful for him to bring into the presence of his gods, men who refused to worship them. The question was answered in the affirmative, provided they would behave with proper respect. Immediately all the gates of this superb edifice were set open, and Montezuma took upon himself to explain the use of all the sacred vessels, instruments, and utensils; an office which he performed with so much ceremony and reverence, that the Spaniards could not refrain from laughter. Of this levity he took no notice, except by a look of disapprobation; but the intemperate zeal of Cortez soon obliged him to explain himself in a different manner. "Permit me, Sir," cried that enthusiastic warrior, "to fix the cross of Christ before these images of the devil; and you shall see, whether they deserve adoration or contempt!" This proposal enraged the priests, and reduced Montezuma to great perplexity, between his reverence for religion, his dread of the priesthood, and his regard for the rights of hospitality in the persons of the Spaniards. "You might at least," said he, "have shewn this place the respect due to my person *!"—a reproach which equally shewed his good sense and politeness; and though the Spanish historians ascribe its moderation to fear, was more severe, properly understood, than any chastisement he could have inflicted on their barbarous insolence. Cortez, it would appear, understood it in that light; for he took an immediate resolution to converse no more on the subject of religion, and laid aside all thoughts of converting Montezuma †.

It will be proper here to introduce a short description of the capital of this vast empire; of the splendour of the court, the immense revenues of the monarch, and other particulars, equally conducive to gratify curiosity, and render the subsequent narrative more intelligible and entertaining.

Mexico, anciently known by the name of Tenuchtitlan, is situated in a spacious plain, surrounded by lofty mountains, whence roll down a variety of streams into the valley, and being there collected, form several lakes, the two largest of which, about thirty leagues in circumference, communicate with each other. The water of the one is fresh, that of the other brackish, from a nitrous quality in the soil at the bottom. The islands and banks of these two lakes were adorned with fifty towns, many of which contained five thousand, and some ten thousand houses. In the middle of the salt water lake stood the great city of Mexico; which, in the time of Montezuma, is said to have contained sixty thousand houses ‡. It con-

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 12.

† He remained satisfied with obtaining leave to worship God in public:—"and having ordered one of the principal rooms of the palace to be cleared out, and white-washed, raised an altar; and in the front, upon steps richly adorned, placed the image of our Lady, and fixing a large cross near the gate, formed a very decent chapel." De Solis, ut supra.

‡ Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 5.

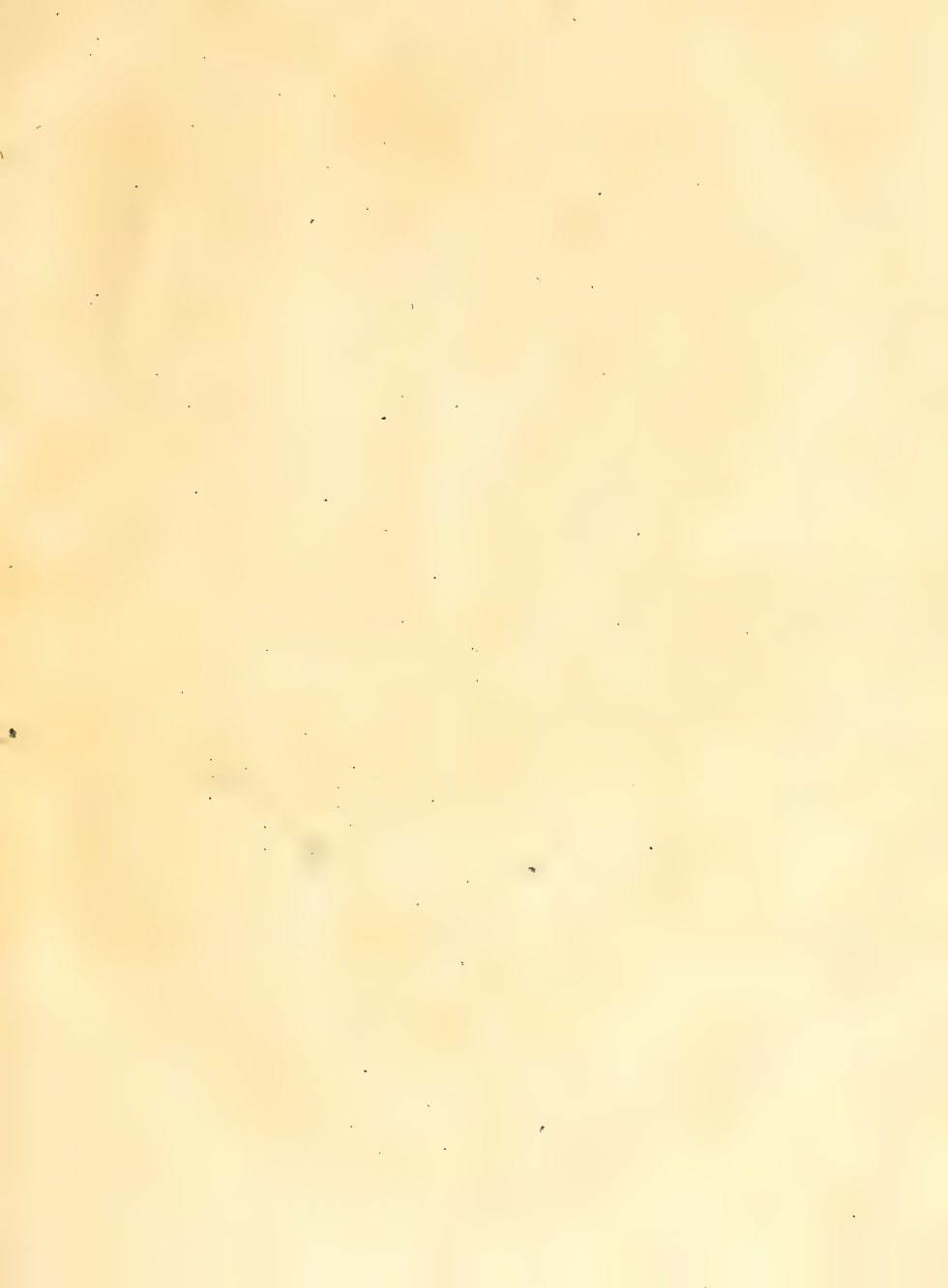
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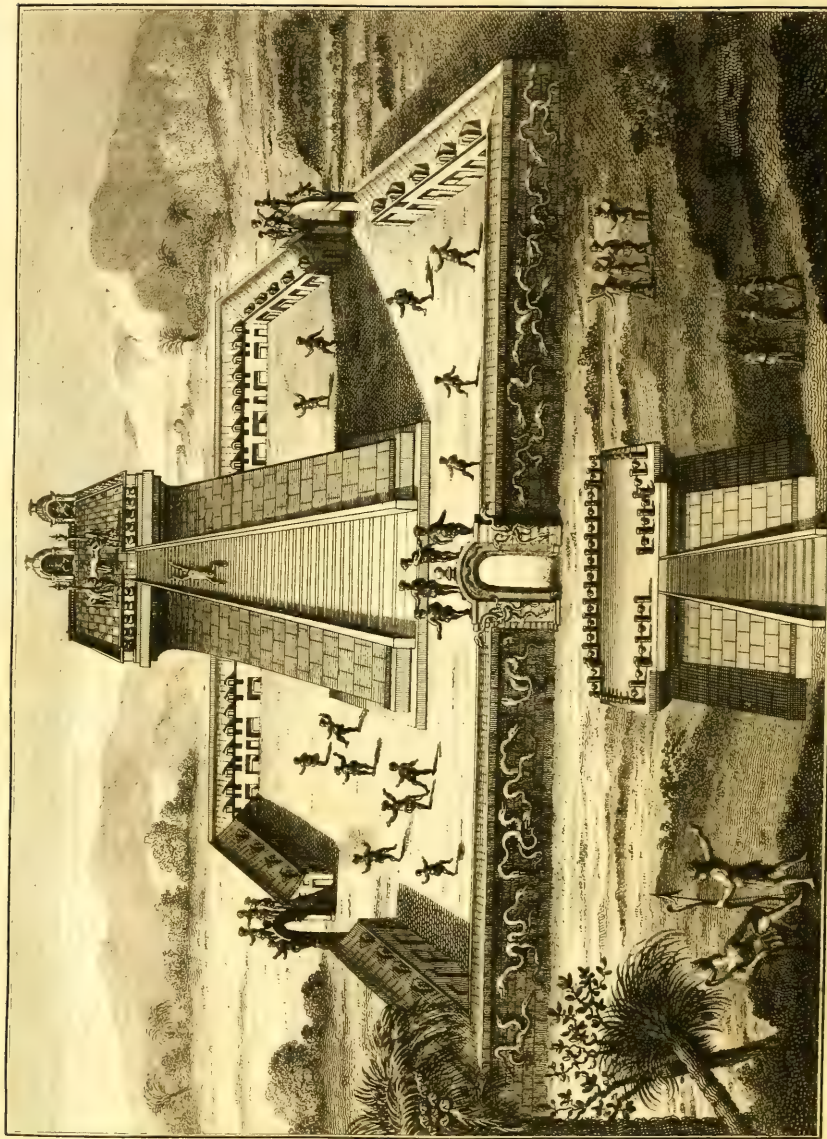
municated with the land by means of raised causeways, or artificial streets, erected at a vast expence, and which were no less ornamental than useful. These causeways were three in number: that towards the west was about half a league in length; that towards the north, a league; and that towards the south, two leagues. On the east the city could only be approached by canoes. In each of those causeways were openings at proper intervals, through which the water passed; and over these were laid beams of timber, which being covered with earth and stones, the avenue had every where an uniform appearance. The city itself was no less remarkable than its situation. It was divided between the court and the common people. The latter possessed the district called Tlatelulco, where the houses were small, low and mean, but regularly arranged. In the other district, or what was properly termed Mexico, and occupied by the nobility and the prince, the dwellings were stately and magnificent. In both districts the buildings were laid out in squares, where an infinite quantity of merchandize was daily exposed to sale; and two of these, one in each district, allotted for the great markets and fairs, were so large, that an hundred thousand persons could, in either of them, carry on traffic, without incommoding one another*. The streets were all broad and straight, and of three sorts: one sort being all water, with bridges for the greater convenience of passengers; another all earth, and a third of earth and water. This last sort was most common, and had the most agreeable effect imagination can conceive; a space being left in the middle for canoes to pass, and walks formed on the sides†. Nothing could be better contrived for all the purposes of business or pleasure: Mexico, in a word, resembled in miniature, what we are told of the vast empire of China, in the diversity of land and water; the canals constantly filled with boats; the multitude of inhabitants; the perpetual bustle of the people, and that constant motion in which every object was beheld.

Nothing added more to the beauty and magnificence of the city of Mexico, than the great number of stately temples with which it was adorned. The great temple, in particular, dedicated to the idol Vitzliputzli, or the God of War, was awfully stupendous. The part of the building that first presented itself was a large square court, the wall of which was of hewn stone, wrought on the outside with serpents entwined, which gave a very horrible aspect to the portico. At a little distance from the principal gate, was a place of worship still more dreadful; being decorated with the heads of the unhappy victims who had been sacrificed in the temple, arranged in exact order. Every side of the square had a gate, each fronting one of the four principal streets of the city, over which were four statues of stone, that seemed to point the way back to those who came in an improper disposition. As some reverence was paid to them at entering, they must have been deemed the Threshold Gods. Close to the inside of the court wall were the habitations of the priests, a numerous tribe, and of those who under them attended the service of the temple; yet was there sufficient room left for eight or ten thousand persons to dance on public festivals. In the centre

* Herrera, ut suprà.

† Id. ibid. De Solis, lib. iii. c. 11.





A View of the Great Temple of Mexico.

of this court stood a tower, which exalted its head above all the buildings in the city; and terminated in a kind of half pyramid, of such vast dimensions, that, after it had risen into the air an hundred and twenty stone steps of a beautiful stair-case, the area at the top was forty feet square. The pavement of this area was of jasper; a sort of serpentine balustrade enclosed it; and both sides were covered with stones resembling jet, joined with white and red cement, which had a very happy effect. At the top of the stair-case stood two marble statues, which supported two candlesticks of enormous size, and by the straining of the arms, admirably well expressed the weight of the burden. A little further on was placed the stone, upon which the wretched human victim destined to be sacrificed, was extended on his back, while his heart was taken out; and beyond this stone, fronting the top of the stair-case, stood a chapel of excellent workmanship and materials, covered with a roof of precious wood. Here was placed the idol, behind a curtain, on the high altar. It resembled a human figure of terrible aspect; and was seated on a kind of throne, supported by a blue globe, representing the heavens, from the sides of which came forth rods, headed like snakes. The idol held in the right hand a twining serpent, which served as a staff, and in the left four arrows, that were regarded as a celestial present. By the side of this chapel stood another of the same size and figure; the habitation of an idol, esteemed the brother and friend of the former, and who was supposed to divide with him the patronage of war. The ornaments of both chapels were of inestimable value; the walls being hung, and the altars covered with jewels and precious stones, placed in feather work of most beautiful colours: and there were eight temples in Mexico nearly equal to this in wealth and magnificence. Those of a smaller size amounted to two thousand; and were dedicated to as many different idols of various names, forms, and attributes. There was scarce a street without its tutelary deity; nor was there any calamity incident to human life without its altar, to which man might have recourse for a remedy*.

Besides the palace, already described, where the emperor kept his court, and that where the Spaniards were lodged, Montezuma had several houses of pleasure, which at once served to adorn the capital and to display his grandeur. One of them, a most magnificent structure, with vast galleries, supported by pillars of jasper, was converted into an aviary. Here was assembled every species of birds which New Spain produced, valuable either on account of their voices or plumage. The number of these birds was so great, that above three hundred persons were constantly employed in feeding and cleaning them. From their feathers were made some of the most beautiful paintings in Montezuma's collection.

At some distance from the aviary, the emperor had another house, of such extent as to be capable of containing his whole court. There his huntsmen resided, and with them an infinite number of birds of prey; among which was the royal eagle, of an extraordinary size, and the royal hawks, or birds of a similar species, no ways inferior to those of Europe in pouncing on their prey, or re-

* D: S lii, lib. iii. c. 13. Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 6.

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turning to the lure. In another square of the same house were kept the emperor's wild beasts; and among others the Mexican bull, not unlike the buffalo, or wild bull of Bohemia. This animal is large, strong, fierce, and majestic in his appearance; has a hump on his back like a camel, a head armed like a common bull, and hair on his neck like a lion. It was customary with the Mexicans, from the earliest antiquity, to estimate the grandeur of the sovereign by the number of wild beasts in his possession; whence we may judge of the multitude maintained by Montezuma, who was by far the most magnificent prince that ever swayed the Mexican sceptre.

But of all the public buildings belonging to this great monarch, none was more worthy of observation than the armoury. It was divided into two apartments: the one, where the arms were made; and the other, where they were deposited, after being finished. In the first, different artizans had certain shops assigned them, agreeable to their several employments. They prepared the wood for the arrows in one place, in another they worked flint stones for the points; in a third bows were made; and in a fourth swords and darts. All sorts of arms, in a word, whether offensive or defensive, were made by particular workmen, in distinct shops, under the direction of superintendants, who kept an exact account of the quantity and kinds of arms. In the other apartment, or the magazine, weapons of all kinds were arranged in the most distinct and beautiful order, and thence distributed to the troops, as occasion required, the vacant spaces being immediately filled up by others *.—To all these houses were annexed extensive gardens, laid out with much taste and magnificence; and in each of them was a large piece of ground, entirely occupied with medicinal plants and herbs, for all sorts of wounds, pains, and infirmities, in the knowledge, and proper application of which, consisted the whole skill of the Mexican physicians †.

Agreeable to the external magnificence that appeared round the court of Montezuma, was his domestic œconomy; all being splendid, ceremonious, and great. When this prince ascended the throne, he augmented the number, and quality of the royal attendants, among whom none were admitted but nobility of the first distinction. He excluded the commonalty, contrary to the advice of his council; it being a maxim with him, that princes ought to govern at a distance those, who either had no sense of obligation, or were unable to express their gratitude by proper returns. The nobility were even employed to protect the royal person; Montezuma's body-guards consisting of two hundred young noblemen, of the first quality in the empire, the out-posts round the palace only being defended by common soldiers. There was indeed a principle of policy, as well as pride, in this institution; for it inured the nobility to the use of arms, at the same time that it kept them in greater dependance upon the sovereign.

The emperor's women were without number, every beautiful female in his dominions being sent to court by his officers, who considered the elegance of

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 14. Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 4. The arms of the Mexicans, and of all the natives of New Spain, nearly resembled those of the Tabascans, already described.

† Ut supra.

the royal seraglio as of importance to the grandeur of the state ; but only two of these women, who were lodged in separate apartments, and attended with the utmost magnificence, bore the title of *Queen*. The mistresses, when discarded by the satiated monarch, generally found husbands among the nobility, as they never failed to acquire large sums while basking in the sunshine of royal favour : nor did their reputation at all suffer by the liberties granted to Montezuma ; on the contrary, it was deemed an honour to have been thought worthy of his bed. But while these concubines remained at court, they lived in the utmost decorum, their conduct being subject to the inspection of certain grave matrons, who daily made their report to the emperor.

Nothing could be more pompous, solemn, and austere than Montezuma's carriage, when he gave audience ; his manner of receiving Cortez being so different, as to excite the astonishment of the whole court. The person who obtained audience entered barefooted, and made his obeisance, without lifting his eyes from the ground : he spoke in the most humble and submissive terms, and retired in the same manner he advanced ; repeating his obeisances, never turning his back, and keeping his eyes fixed upon the ground. The emperor listened with attention, and answered with gravity, seeming to proportion his voice to his look, which was often awfully severe.

Montezuma ate alone, and frequently in public, but always with the state and magnificence of a prince. His table was generally covered with two hundred dishes, the most exquisite in their kinds that the empire could afford. Before he sat down, he ran his eye over the whole ; selected a few of those most agreeable to his palate, and ordered the rest to be distributed among the nobility in waiting. Nor was this daily profusion any more than a small part of the expence of his household ; for he kept sumptuous tables furnished for all the officers and servants of the court, and even for those who resorted thither, either upon business or pleasure. Every thing was sent up to the emperor's own table in gold, curious shells, or some other valuable substance, enriched with jewels ; and the attendants were constantly at hand with different sorts of liquors, some mixed with saluteriferous herbs, and many impregnated with certain medicines that were regarded as restoratives or provocatives. After dinner he drank chocolate, and smoked tobacco, perfumed with liquid amber. During meals a band of music attended ; which no sooner ceased, than the emperor suffered himself to be entertained with the Jokers, or the tricks and frolics of a number of buffoons and dwarfs, kept for that purpose about his person. He was fond of these wretches he said, only because he could discover truth under their pleasantry ; whereas there was no penetrating the mask of hypocrisy worn by complete courtiers. The music was a concert of voices and instruments ; the singers, in a kind of musical cadence, chanting the gallant exploits of the heroes of their country, and the memorable actions of their princes, thus teaching the rising generation to emulate the glory of their ancestors.

It will readily be imagined, that the royal treasures must have been immense, to maintain such excessive pomp and magnificence. They were equal to it all.

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valuable funds were drawn from the mines of gold and silver, the salt-works, and other rights established in the crown from time immemorial; but a still greater revenue arose from the contributions of the subjects, exorbitantly increased since the accession of Montezuma. There was not a husbandman, in this vast and populous empire, but was obliged to pay to the sovereign a third of the produce of his lands and stock. Artists were taxed in the same proportion; and the poor were obliged to work certain days for the court, without fee or reward. All taxes were levied with the utmost rigour: nor was it without reason that the people clamoured against the tyranny of the administration, of which the emperor was not ignorant, though he ingeniously disguised it, in his speech to Cortez. Every town in the neighbourhood of the capital furnished men for the king's works, provided fuel for the royal palace, or contributed otherwise towards the support of the court. In consequence of such assistance Montezuma was enabled to complete some stupendous buildings, aqueducts, and other public and magnificent pieces of architecture, at a very small expence to the treasury. The tribute of the nobility consisted in guarding and attending the emperor's person, or serving in his armies with a certain number of their vassals and retainers, maintained at their own expence, or on the spoils of the enemy: yet were they continually making him presents, which, though received as voluntary gifts, he secretly regarded as rights due to his crown, his dignity, and the anxieties and cares attending on royalty*.

Montezuma made an artful display of all his pomp and grandeur to the Spaniards, either with a view to engage them as friends, or deter them from hostile attempts; or perhaps merely from a principle of hospitality, and real respect for strangers, whose valour he could not fail to admire. He went to all public spectacles, attended by Cortez and his captains, whom he treated with the most polite familiarity. They were admitted on all occasions to his palace, without form or ceremony, the distance and stateliness of the sovereign being observed only towards his own subjects. He was daily distributing presents among the Spanish officers and soldiers, and not without discernment and distinction of merit. The nobility, in imitation of their prince, were ambitious of rendering themselves agreeable to the strangers, whom they treated with a respect bordering on submission; and the populace, carrying the example of the throne yet farther, bent the knee to the meanest of the Spanish soldiers†.

But amid this scene of novelty, grandeur, and dissipation, and these flattering attentions, which began to have an intoxicating effect on the army, Cortez was frequently wrapt in thought and anxious solicitude, both in regard to his present situation and his future proceedings. He saw no likelihood of accomplishing the end of his expedition, and perceived the possibility of his retreat being utterly cut off, by breaking down the bridges on the causeways, or destroying part of the causeways themselves; by which means he and his little army would be encircled

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 4, 5. De Solis, lib. III. c. 16.
lib. iii. c. 18.

† De Solis,

up in an hostile city, surrounded on every side by water, and assailed by multitudes sufficient to overwhelm them. Montezuma indeed shewed them every mark of respect, and made them every profession of friendship; but ought they to rely on these as real, or consider them as feigned?—Had they not already several instances of his treachery, under the mask of hospitality and kindness?—But granting his friendship sincere, was there any certainty of its continuance?—Their safety at best depended on the smile of an arbitrary and capricious monarch, in whose attachment they had no reason to confide, and whose frown would irrevocably decide their fate. Such were the reflections of Cortez, when two Tlascalcan soldiers, disguised in the habit of Mexicans, arrived with a letter from Villa Rica, which confirmed the justice of his apprehensions, and brought him to a determination in regard to his future conduct.

Juan de Escalante, governor of the new colony, had preserved every thing in a state of tranquility, till one of Montezuma's generals arrived with an army in the neighbourhood of Villa Rica, and committed hostilities on the Indians in alliance with the Spaniards. This general, whose name was Qualpopocal, commanded the imperial forces on the frontiers of Zempoalla, and had assembled them, in order to assist the commissaries appointed to levy the royal tribute, which the caziques, depending on the protection of the Spaniards, refused to pay. In consequence of this refusal, recourse was had to force, and the greatest extortions and violences were exercised. The Totonagues, who, as has been already observed, were a warlike race, and inhabited the mountainous part of the country, attempted resistance, and entreated the governor of Villa Rica to take arms in defence of his confederates. Escalante assured them of his protection; but before he proceeded to extremities, he sent messengers to the Mexican general, requesting him, in a friendly manner, to suspend hostilities, until he received fresh advices from the emperor; as it was not possible that Montezuma should authorise injuries against the allies of a monarch, whose ambassadors he honoured with so cordial a reception at court. To this message Qualpopocal replied, that he was equally able to comprehend and execute the orders of his prince; and should any one attempt to divert him from the chastisement of those rebels, he was likewise able to defend in the field the measures he had taken*.

Escalante considered this answer as a challenge, which he could not refuse, without sinking in the opinion of his Indian allies: he therefore assembled a body of two thousand Totonagues, and drew from the garrison a detachment of forty Spaniards, with which he marched against the enemy. The Mexicans, consisting of about four thousand men, were defeated, after an obstinate engagement; but the Spaniards bought the victory dear, the governor and seven private soldiers being mortally wounded. Among these was Juan de Arguillo, a man of extraordinary stature, and very great strength, who fell gallantly fighting, at a time when he could not be succoured†.

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 1. De Solis, lib. iii. c. 12.

† Id. *ibid.*

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Of this unpropitious victory, with all its circumstances, the council of Villa Rica transmitted an account to Cortez. The general immediately communicated the whole affair to his principal officers, desiring them to deliberate on the measures necessary to be pursued in such a delicate conjuncture, and conceal their knowledge of the disaster from the soldiers, who could not safely be trusted with a secret of so much importance. Without delivering his own opinion, he retired to his chamber; and after ruminating long on the inconveniences naturally resulting from such a misfortune, and the expedients by which they might be remedied, he sent privately for some of the most intelligent and best affected of his Indian allies, and inquired, Whether they had observed any suspicious circumstances in the conduct of the Mexicans. Their answer was, That the common people were entirely occupied by the festivals given by Montezuma in honour of the Spaniards, but the nobility appeared pensive and mysterious, and had frequent conferences, the result of which was kept secret: and they added, that they had overheard some expressions which admitted of a sinister interpretation; such as the possibility of breaking down the bridges on the causeways, and other words to the same effect. Some of them had also heard it whispered, that, a few days before, the head of a Spaniard was privately brought as a present to Montezuma; and that he received it with astonishment on account of its great size, the strength of the features, and the fierceness of the aspect, marks which seemed to point it out as belonging to the unfortunate prisoner, Juan de Arguillo*.

This intelligence increased the uneasiness of Cortez, who thence concluded that Montezuma must be privy to the proceedings of his general, and formed one of the boldest resolutions that ever entered the human heart. He determined to seize the emperor in the midst of his palace, and carry him prisoner to the Spanish quarters. But before he communicated this resolution to his officers, he was willing to hear their several opinions, that he might endeavour to bring over by argument those who should happen to be of a different way of thinking, in order to prevent their being startled at so daring a proposal. For this purpose he assembled his officers, and some principal soldiers, who, on account of their merit or experience, were wont to be consulted on such occasions, and laid before them the information he had received, earnestly requesting their advice how to act. They were very much divided in their sentiments: some advising, that a passport from Montezuma should be solicited, that they might march to the relief of the colony: others declared, without pointing out any measure, that this would be a reflection on the character of the Spaniards, and an acknowledgment of their own weakness: a third party thought, as the relief of the colony was essentially necessary, that it would be best to march off privately with all the riches they had acquired; and a fourth party gave it as their opinion, which was most general, that the only honourable course to be pursued was, to remain in Mexico till some safe method of retreat could be contrived, without seeming to have any knowledge of what had passed at Villa Rica.

* Ut supra.

As none of these opinions entirely coincided with the resolution of Cortez, he began his speech with objecting to the passport, as unworthy of soldiers who had opened their way, by dint of arms, to the capital of the empire. The notion of retreating privately he said, would prove equally injurious to their honour, and be less conducive to their safety; for the moment their flight should be known, it would be easy for the emperor to give notice to his armies on the frontiers to intercept them, while he rushed himself, from the capital, like a torrent, on their rear. They would find themselves beset, and hemmed in on every side, without one foot of ground on which they could tread with security. He therefore joined in opinion with those, who were for remaining in their present situation, but differed with respect to the manner. Some great action, he urged, must be performed; some blow struck that would excite the astonishment of the Mexicans, in order to recover their esteem and veneration, sunk by the late unfortunate accident. "To this end," added he, "I hold it absolutely necessary to seize the person of Montezuma, and carry him prisoner to our quarters. An action which will at once strike them with terror, and afford us an opportunity of negotiating, both with the emperor and his vassals, after such a manner as may be most for the honour of the crown of Spain, as well as our own personal security. I am very sensible of the perils and difficulties attending such an enterprize: but great actions owe their birth to great dangers."

A resolution so flatteringly heroic was soon embraced by the majority of the council. The hour when it was usual for Cortez to pay his compliments to Montezuma, was chosen for carrying it into execution, that no alarm might be given by an unseasonable visit. All the Spaniards were commanded to be under arms in their quarters, and to hold themselves in readiness, without noise or disturbance, until they received farther orders. The avenues to the palace were secured by small parties of soldiers dropped in proper places as if by accident; and the general, accompanied by Alvarado, Sandoval, Velásquez de Leon, Lugo, and Davila, five of his principal officers, and followed by thirty chosen soldiers, advanced to the palace, where they were admitted without suspicion, it being customary for them to appear armed in the royal presence. Montezuma, with his wonted complaisance, came to the door of his apartment to receive them: they took their seats; and the emperor's attendants, as usual, retired out of respect. Cortez now began his complaint: he painted in the strongest language every circumstance of the conduct of Quälpopoca, the death of several Spaniards, and the excuse made to the colony that every thing had been transacted by express orders from the emperor; an accusation, however, which he pretended to disbelieve, declaring that he had too much regard for the royal person to credit any thing so unworthy of his imperial majesty, as an attempt to destroy in the provinces the friends and relations of those, whom he was entertaining at court.

Confounded at this unexpected accusation, Montezuma changed colour, and warmly asserted his own innocence, strenuously denying that he had ever given such orders. Cortez replied, that he was fully satisfied his majesty could have no concern in an action so base, but that the Spaniards would never be convinced

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he did not harbour hostile intentions against them, nor would his own vassals be undeceived in regard to this matter, unless by some extraordinary mark of attachment and confidence he should efface such a calumny; that he was therefore come to entreat him to go immediately to the Spanish quarters, without noise or disturbance, as if of his own free choice, with a resolution there to remain, till such time as his innocence should be fully proved, to the satisfaction of all parties. By this generous confidence, the general added, Montezuma would not only appease the just indignation of the great monarch whose servant he was, and the jealousy of his followers, but would restore the lustre of his own honour, at present tarnished by the baneful breath of malignity; and he gave his word as a gentleman, a foldier, and the minister of the greatest prince in the universe, that he should be treated among the Spaniards with all the respect due to his royal dignity, as they only desired to be assured of his good will, that they might henceforth more cordially honour and obey him. A proposal so extraordinary bereaved Montezuma of speech, and almost of motion; and Cortez took this opportunity to observe, by way of palliating the matter, that the quarters which his imperial majesty had assigned the Spaniards, was a royal palace, where he sometimes chose to pass a few days, and therefore it would not seem strange to his subjects should he change his residence in order to remove the present complaint, which was properly speaking that of one sovereign against another; that if his general only should appear to be in fault, the injury might be redressed, without pushing matters to that extremity, in which the quarrels of sovereigns commonly terminate.

Impatient of a language, which had never before saluted his ears, Montezuma collected his spirits, and haughtily replied, That persons of his rank were not accustomed to deliver themselves up to imprisonment; nor would his subjects permit such an affront to be offered to their sovereign, should he even forget his own dignity so far as to stoop to so mean a compliance. This answer obliged Cortez to deliver himself with more firmness: he little valued, he said, the opposition of the Mexicans, provided his majesty was willing to remove, and free him from the necessity of violating their mutual amity. A warm altercation here ensued, in the course of which Cortez endeavoured alternately to soothe and to intimidate the emperor; and Montezuma, sensible of his danger, made several offers which he hoped would yield the desired satisfaction. Among others, he proposed to send immediately for Qualepopoca and all his officers, and give them up to Cortez to be punished as he should think proper; and he offered to surrender, in the mean time, two of his sons, as hostages for the performance of his promise; adding with a chagrin bordering on weakness, that he was not a person who could hide himself, or flee to the mountains.

Cortez rejected all these expedients; and as Montezuma still refused to surrender himself, the Spanish officers grew uneasy, suspecting that danger might ensue from the delay. This consideration induced Valasquez de Leon, a violent young man, to exclaim, "Why waste more time in talking?—Let us either seize or kill him!"—Words which were uttered with so much vehemence,
and

and accompanied by such threatening gestures, as struck Montezuma with terror. He inquired their meaning of Donna Marina, who was always present on such occasions, and who replied with admirable presence of mind, as if she desired not to be overheard by the Spaniards: "My Lord, you run a great hazard by refusing to comply with the request of those people, who are equally resolute and powerful. I am your own loyal slave: my thoughts are continually employed to serve you: I am likewise one of their confidants, and well acquainted with their most secret intentions. If you go with them, you will be treated with all the respect due to so great a prince; but if you longer resist, the consequences may be fatal." This well-timed speech, delivered with an air of sincerity, and solicitude for his safety, determined Montezuma to comply. Without entering into any further dispute, he instantly rose from his seat, and addressing himself to the Spaniards, said, "Let us go to your quarters; for so the gods will have it. Into your hands I commit myself." Presently after, he called his attendants, ordered them to get ready his chair and equipage, and told his ministers, That, for certain reasons of state, he had resolved to spend some days with the strangers; desiring them to publish to all his subjects, that he went voluntarily, and for the interest of the crown, and the advantage of the state. At the same time he commanded one of the captains of his guards to bring Quallpopoca, and his principal officers, prisoners to Mexico; delivering to him, as his authority, the royal signet, which he constantly carried tied to his right arm.

All these orders were given publicly, and explained by Marina to Cortez and his officers, in order to prevent them from harbouring disagreeable suspicions on hearing the emperor talk to his people, or committing any unseasonable act of violence; and Montezuma, accompanied by his usual attendants, quitted his palace, the Spaniards marching on foot close by his chair, for the greater security, but under pretence of doing him honour. A report quickly spread through the city, that the emperor was carried off by the strangers, and the streets were in a moment crowded with people. Every face wore marks of sorrow and surprise, but no person attempted to rescue the unhappy prince; so great was their awe of the Spaniards! though some bewailed his condition with tears, and others made loud howlings, while many threw themselves upon the ground, like men in despair. Montezuma, willing to appease an insurrection from which he saw no relief was to be expected, commanded the populace to cease their cries; and at the first motion of his hand, a profound silence ensued. He then told them, with an air of gaiety and composure, That he was under no constraint, but was going voluntarily to pass a few days with his new friends. Accustomed to revere their sovereign's will, the multitude instantly dispersed; and Montezuma, in order to ingratiate himself with the Spaniards, issued a proclamation, setting forth, that all persons guilty of any riot, or public disturbance, should be punished with death*.

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 18, 19. Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 1.

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Thus was a warlike and powerful prince seized, at noon day, in the heart of his capital, and in his own palace, surrounded by a multitude of guards, and carried prisoner by six strangers, to be disposed of at their pleasure! The annals of history afford nothing parallel either to the deliberate boldness or the mild success of this action; which exceeds so far the standard of human events, as to want even that degree of probability which fable requires, and would appear altogether incredible, were it not authenticated by the most undeniable testimonies, and confirmed by circumstances*.

When Montezuma arrived in the Spanish quarters, he made choice of apartments separate from those of the army, which were immediately furnished by his own servants with the best moveables from the royal palace; and Cortez placed a strong guard of Spaniards at the different avenues, and doubled the centinels round the quarters, lest any attempt should be made to rescue the captive monarch. Orders were issued to the soldiers to admit all the gentlemen of Montezuma's retinue, and also the nobility and ministers, in the same manner as if he were under no restraint; yet with this caution, that a certain number only should be allowed to enter at a time, under pretence of keeping the emperor from being crowded. Cortez desired leave to visit him the same evening, with as much ceremony as formerly; and a similar respect was shewn to him by all the Spanish officers and soldiers.

In consequence of this mild treatment Montezuma resumed his wonted cheerfulness; distributed presents among the Spaniards, and caressed them with the same cordiality as if they had done him no injury. He never discovered the least weakness under his confinement, nor once made it known to his servants or ministers; a rare instance of magnanimity under adversity!—He was too proud to have it thought that he could exist in such a situation, though he could hope for relief by no other means; and his subjects had so high an opinion of his spirit, that they generally adopted the desired idea, regarding his retirement as the effect of his own voluntary resolution. In this idea they were confirmed by the manner in which the affairs of government were conducted. Montezuma discharged all the functions of a sovereign, while in prison, with the same regularity as if he had been at his own palace: he gave audience at the accustomed hour; heard the advice and representations of his ministers; and applied himself to all business, whether of a civil or military nature. When disengaged from these weighty cares, he spent his time entirely with the Spaniards, and used to declare that he was not himself without them. He became so entirely reconciled to his fate, that he seemed to have no inclination to change his condition†.

In the midst of this scene of amity, Qualepopoca, his son, and five of his principal officers, who had been concerned in the death of the Spaniards in the neighbourhood of Villa Rica, were brought prisoners to Mexico, in consequence

* For this observation the author is indebted to De Solis, not to Dr. Robertson, who has borrowed it, without acknowledging his obligation.

† De Solis, lib. iii. c. 19, 20.

of the orders issued by Montezuma. The emperor immediately sent them to Cortez, that he might inquire into the nature of their crime, and inflict upon them such punishment as they should seem to deserve. During the course of their examination, they confessed the whole charge laid against them, without once mentioning any authority from the emperor for such proceedings; but when they were afterwards urged to a more complete discovery, and perceived the danger to which they were exposed, they declared that they had acted in obedience to the imperial command. This confession, however, Cortez treated as a treasonable subterfuge, in order to screen themselves from punishment. He therefore ordered them to be tried by a court-martial composed of Spanish officers; by which they were adjudged to deserve death, and condemned to be burnt alive before the royal palace, as criminals who had not only violated the sacred laws of nations, but incurred the penalty of high treason, by presuming to involve their sovereign in their own guilt.

This was a cruel and severe sentence, dictated wholly by motives of policy. If Qualepoca acted by authority, as the Spaniards seem to have believed, he could not possibly be guilty: at any rate, he only performed what he considered to be the duty of his office; and Cortez, who appeared in the character of an ambassador, had surely no right to assume that of a supreme judge. But his arrogance and cruelty did not stop here. Before he ventured to execute the sentence passed on the Mexican officers, he determined to take such measures as should deter both the people and the sovereign from thinking of revenge, and shew them what an awful thing it was to shed the blood of a Spaniard. For this purpose he waited on Montezuma, and expressed his uneasiness at the quantity of stores laid up in the royal magazine, as an indication of some hostile attempt intended against him and his people. The emperor replied, that it had always been his custom to keep such a supply of arms, as he had many enemies, and his dominions were subject to frequent invasions. Cortez, as usual, seemed satisfied with the truth of this declaration, but solicitous to have the cause of his disquiet removed; and having obtained a kind of tacit consent from Montezuma, ordered all the weapons, collected for the public defence, to be brought from the magazine, and after being broken, to be formed into a pile for the punishment of Qualepoca and his associates by fire.

When these unhappy men were ready to be led forth to execution, Cortez, attended by four of his officers, and a soldier carrying a pair of fetters, entered the apartment of Montezuma; and approaching the captive monarch with his usual respect, but with a more than common severity of countenance, told him in an elevated voice, That his officers now condemned to suffer death, had confessed their crime, and been found deserving of the sentence; but that this was not enough: they had accused him, affirming that they had acted solely by his orders; and that it was therefore necessary, he should expiate those strong presumptions by some personal mortification. Having uttered these words, he commanded the soldier to clap the fetters on Montezuma's legs, and without waiting for a reply, turned his back abruptly, and retired to his own apartment; giving

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giving fresh orders to his guards, that, for the present, they should not suffer the emperor to have any communication with his ministers.

So great was the astonishment of Montezuma, trained up with an idea that his person was sacred and inviolable, to find himself treated with such indignity, that at first he wanted force to resist, and afterwards speech to complain. He remained for some time in a state of silence and seeming insensibility; his attendants, bathed in tears, throwing themselves at his feet, and bearing up the weight of his fetters with their hands, without presuming to speak, and thrusting fine cloths through the links of the chains, that they might not touch his flesh. He recovered by degrees from his confusion and amazement, and began to break out into loud lamentations, considering this profanation as a prelude to his death; but suddenly recollecting his illustrious character, he threw aside fear, and expected his fate with the fortitude of a hero*.

Cortez lost no time in completing his bold, but atrocious design. His situation would now admit neither of delay nor hesitation: matters were come to a crisis; and nothing but the same undaunted resolution which had dictated the measure, could ensure it success. The pretended criminals were carried to the place appointed for their fate; and the sentence of the Spanish court-martial was literally executed in presence of an innumerable multitude of Mexicans, who beheld in silent astonishment, without the least attempt at violence or opposition, the double insult offered to the majesty of their empire, in the punishment of some of their bravest warriors, for attempting to rid them of a set of rapacious strangers, and in the destruction of the arms provided for the public defence, by the foresight of their ancestors! employed by those strangers, as the means of that punishment, and consumed before their eyes in one general blaze!—They were impressed with terror, intermingled with respect and admiration, wondering at the authority which the strangers assumed, without daring, even in thought, to call in question their jurisdiction, as it was sanctified by the approbation of their sovereign†.

Immediately after the execution, Cortez repaired to the royal apartment, and addressing himself to Montezuma with a cheerful countenance, “My Lord,” said he, “the traitors, who were so bold as to blemish your character, have received the punishment due to their crimes; and you have sufficiently refuted the infamous calumny, by submitting to this short mortification in the intermission of personal liberty.” He then fell upon his knees, and with his own hands took off the fetters; endeavouring by this excessive complaisance to efface all memory of the injury, while the terror of the punishment should remain. Montezuma received his release with a tumultuous joy, which shewed how deeply the indignity of bondage had affected him. He embraced Cortez with transport, and seemed to forget in his deliverer the author of his disgrace. They sat down together; when entering amicably into conversation, Cortez ordered the guards to withdraw, and told the emperor, that he was now at liberty to return to his own palace, the

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 1. De Solis, lib. iii. c. 20.

† Id. *ibid.*

cause of his detention being removed. This offer Montezuma declined, for reasons with which Cortez was well acquainted, and which he had taken care to enforce before he ventured to make it, having often heard him declare his sentiments on that subject: he was afraid of sinking in the opinion of his vassals, should it be known he had been detained by force, and owed his liberty to favour; but he gave another turn to his reply. He had taken a resolution, he said, to stay where he was, out of regard to the Spaniards, while they continued at his court; being sensible that, as soon as he returned to his palace, his nobility and ministers would press him to take up arms, in order to revenge on the strangers the indignity which he had suffered. Cortez praised his generous design, and made him the warmest acknowledgments, as if he had sincerely believed the emperor was content to remain in prison for the greater security of the Spaniards, and to protect them with his authority *.

From this day forward, every thing was contrived in such a manner as to persuade the royal prisoner and his subjects, that he was at perfect liberty, and only a visitor by inclination to the Spaniards; and he returned the seeming obligation with so much affability and liberality, as really engaged the affections of these rapacious and unfeeling invaders. Hitherto the virtues of Montezuma had lain concealed, even from his own domestics. His generosity, sincerity, magnanimity, and warmth of friendship, were obscured by the necessary affectation of dignity, reserve, and austerity. After he had, by his gentleness and moderation, fully gained and merited the confidence of Cortez, he one day asked permission to visit his temples, promising on the word of a sovereign to return to his prison; for so he used to call his confinement jocularly, when only Spaniards were present. His subjects, he said, began to suspect he was detained by force, and commotions might arise, unless prevented by some proof of his freedom. The general replied, without the smallest hesitation, that he was at perfect liberty to go when or where he pleased; and that he imputed this request to the excess of his goodness, as he must be sensible that all restraint was now removed: but he accepted, nevertheless, the promise which the emperor made him of not changing his residence, as if desirous to preserve the honour and happiness which he enjoyed in the conversation and company of his royal guest. He likewise exacted from Montezuma another promise, in return for this indulgence: That he would abolish the barbarous custom of human sacrifices at the altars of his gods: a promise which that prince religiously observed, prohibiting all human victims, not only in the temples of Mexico, but in those of the whole empire †.

Montezuma's first excursion was to the great temple, whither he went with his usual pomp, the people celebrating the first appearance of their monarch with loud acclamations of joy. All past grievances were forgot: the oppressions of the tyrant seemed lost in his misfortunes; and nothing now appeared but the bright

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 2. De Solis, lib. iii. c. 20.
lib. vi. c. 3. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 1.

† Herrera, dec. II.

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side of the royal character, the lustre of which became more attractive through the cloud of adversity. He received their congratulations with an air of satisfaction and majesty, and was particularly profuse, on this occasion, in the favours bestowed on the nobility, and in the gifts distributed among the people. Having complied with the duties of his religion, he returned to the Spanish quarters, declaring, That the pleasure which he had in residing among his new guests, made him no less desirous of returning, than the discharge of his promise. Henceforth he continued to go abroad when he thought proper, and often partook of public diversions, always returning at night to the quarters; inasmuch, that the Mexicans began to consider his confinement, as actually the result of his affection for the strangers: and it was now customary for the nobility to make their first application to Cortez, when any favour was wanted from Montezuma; the general being regarded as, in all respects, the chief counsellor, friend, minister, and favourite of the sovereign*.

Cortez, however, during this flattering tranquillity, never lost sight of his danger; but was equally attentive to the precautions necessary to his present security, and those requisite to forward his high designs, though as yet he could not say in what they were likely to terminate. He had already recovered all the reputation which the Spaniards lost in the late unfortunate adventure at Villa Rica, by the awful punishment inflicted on the general, and the humiliation to which the emperor had been subjected; but the affairs of that colony were not immediately restored to such order as might be wished. On the death of Escalante, he appointed Sandoval to succeed him as governor; and as he could not, at that time, spare so valuable an officer, Alonso de Grado, a man of experience and abilities, but of doubtful fidelity, was sent in quality of his lieutenant. For this step Cortez is blamed; and justly, if we may judge by circumstances, in entrusting a place of such importance, and the only retreat which he had left, in case of a failure at Mexico, into the hands of a man whose attachment was suspected, and who was besides of a turbulent disposition. But Grado's own arrogance and rapaciousness remedied an error, which might have proved fatal to the colony, as well as to the authority of the general. He no sooner reached Villa Rica, than he behaved in such a haughty manner as entirely disgusted the garrison, while he enraged the neighbouring caziques, by the exorbitant presents which he demanded. He likewise proposed to some of his friends, to deliver up the place to Velasquez, should any armament arrive from Cuba. These beginnings of treachery and mal-administration, of which Cortez had intelligence, determined him to dispatch Sandoval to his government; and the lieutenant was secured and sent prisoner to Mexico†.

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 1. The remark of Dr. Robertson, on this subject, is truly worthy of attention. "The arts of polished nations," says he, "in subjecting such as are less improved, has been nearly the same in every period. The system of screening a foreign usurpation, under the sanction of authority derived from the rulers of a country; the device of employing the magistracies and forms already established as instruments to introduce a new dominion, of which we are apt to beat as sublime refinements in policy peculiar to the present age, were inventions of a more early period, and had been tried with success in the West, long before they were practised in the East." *Ibid.* America, book v. † Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 2. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 1.

In the course of those journeys to and from Villa Rica, Cortez took measures for carrying more effectually into execution a design which he had long meditated, and which was still necessary to complete his security. He wished to have such command of the lake as might insure him a retreat, should the Mexicans be induced, by levity or disgust, to break down the bridges or destroy the causeways. He accordingly made use of the opportunities mentioned, to facilitate the conveyance of some cordage, sails, nails, and other spoils of the ships to Mexico, in order that vessels might be constructed of a sufficient size and force to effect the desired end: and the manner in which he accomplished it, without giving suspicion to the court or the emperor, that he was not fully satisfied of his security, was artful and sagacious, in no common degree. He first inflamed the curiosity of Montezuma, by entertaining him with descriptions of the European navigation, and of those floating palaces, as the Mexicans termed the Spanish ships, which moved with such velocity on the water without oars, all the natives of New Spain being ignorant of the use of sails; and when he found that the emperor was extremely desirous of seeing this novelty, he gave him to understand, that nothing was wanting to gratify his curiosity, except a few things from Villa Rica, as he had workmen in his army capable of building such vessels. Happy to contribute every thing in his power towards an undertaking, from which he expected so much pleasure, Montezuma gave immediate orders that all his people should assist Cortez in whatever he should direct concerning the shipping. The naval stores arrived from Villa Rica; wood was cut down and prepared; and in a short time two brigantines were got ready, completely rigged and equipped, and the emperor was invited on board to make the first trial of their sailing. The experiment succeeded to the admiration of Montezuma, and to the astonishment of his whole court, who were assembled on that occasion, and accompanied him on the water in canoes and pleasure boats of various kinds. Some of the Mexicans were struck with the management of the rudder, others with the sails, believing that by these means the Spaniards commanded the winds and the waters. Those of more discernment regarded the whole as a curious invention, which shewed the genius and good sense of the strangers; and the vulgar were fully persuaded, that the Spaniards must be supernatural beings, thus to obtain dominion over the elements *. On the whole, we cannot sufficiently applaud the prudent foresight and address of Cortez, who united in this manner his own security, interest, and reputation, with the amusement of the sovereign and the wonder of the people, in whose opinion it was necessary to stand high, in order to succeed in his designs.

Nor was this the only advantage which Cortez derived from that ascendancy which he had acquired over the mind of Montezuma. He introduced so opportunely into his discourse the praises of the Catholic king, extolling his power, clemency, and justice, that the emperor and his whole court eagerly desired the proffered alliance, and an established commerce between the two states, as what

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 1.

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must prove mutually beneficial. He also made some important discoveries in the way of conversation, started partly to gratify an inquisitive humour; for he had so won the affections of the emperor, that he concealed nothing from him. All suspicion touching his ambitious designs were vanished, and he was now considered as the friend and ally of Montezuma. In consequence of this familiarity and confidence, he obtained very circumstantial information of the strength and extent of the Mexican empire; of its provinces, produce, mountains, rivers, and principal mines; of the distance between the South and North Seas, their harbours, and other particulars: and Montezuma had so little suspicion that the inquiries of Cortez were dictated by any thing but a laudable curiosity, which he was willing to gratify, that he ordered his painters, with the assistance of men skilled in the topography of Mexico, to draw out all his dominions on a piece of cotton, in such a manner as to give an exact representation of every particular meriting regard. He even permitted some Spaniards to take a view of the richest mines in the empire, and of all the ports and bays capable of receiving shipping. This Cortez proposed to him, under pretext of carrying an exact relation to his prince of every thing remarkable; and Montezuma was so far from opposing it, that he commanded some of his soldiers to accompany the Spaniards, and dispatched orders that they should have free admittance, and be instructed in whatever they desired to know*.

Such was the promising situation of Cortez and his companions, when a new transport of enthusiasm had almost blasted all their hopes, and destroyed the confidence gained with so much address. Nothing could be more imprudent, at this juncture, than to attempt a revolution in religion, a point on which the Mexicans had always discovered the greatest jealousy, and on which Montezuma was inflexible: yet such, we are told, on the most unquestionable authority, was the resolution of the Spaniards. For this purpose Cortez, so cool and deliberate in political matters, sallied forth one day, like a maniac, at the head of a party of wild fanatics, determined to overthrow the idols, and convert the great temple into a church. This sudden frenzy threw the whole city into confusion, and Montezuma into the utmost distress. The priests took up arms in defence of their gods, and the populace espoused their cause. The respect which they entertained for the Spaniards gave place to the fervours of devotion; and had not the idols been suffered to remain in their place, the consequence must have proved fatal to the reformers. Cortez desisted from his rash attempt, after dislodging the idols from one of the shrines, and erecting in their stead a crucifix and an image of the Virgin Mary†.

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 3. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 2. Castillo, c. 100.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 2. All the Spanish historians, except De Solis, describe this outrage as a mingled transport of heroic ardour and holy zeal. "Cortez," says Herrera, "put on his best garments, shed many tears of joy and devotion, and was the first who kneeling down worshipped the crucifix, saying, Infinite praise be given to thee, the true God, for ever and ever; inasmuch as thou hast been pleased, that, after so many years as the Devil, sitting on his throne, exercised his tyranny over so many nations, he should, by means of our weak and unworthy hands, be banished to the bottomless pit!" Ut supra.

From this moment the Mexicans began to meditate how they might expel or destroy the Spaniards; and if Montezuma appeared determined to support them, a conspiracy was formed to bring about a revolution in the government, and place another prince upon the throne. At the head of this conspiracy was Cucumazin, nephew to the emperor, an enterprising, high-spirited young man, who grew quite impatient at seeing his kinsman, his sovereign, and the whole empire, governed at pleasure by a stranger, unsupported by power, and whose sole influence was founded on his own address, the credulity of the monarch, and the pusillanimity of the people. He was king of Tezeuco, which he held as a fief of the crown, and first elector in the empire; and, though represented by the Spanish writers as an ambitious, inconsiderate, hot-headed youth, he appears to have been only a warm and sincere patriot. He painted the conduct of Cortez and his companions in the darkest colours, charging them with having violently confined a prince who was loading them with benefits, and with laying the foundation of a despotism, the most cruel and slavish of any, because built upon ignorance, superstition, and hypocrisy. These subjects he seized every opportunity of introducing before the caziques and nobility; and when he found he had sufficiently prepared their minds, he held a secret council of his friends and confederates, at his palace in Tezeuco, where were present the kings of Cuyocan, Iztacpalapa, Tacuba, and Matalcingo, all of them princes of the empire, with other persons of distinction, who had the command of numerous bodies of fighting men.

After touching, in general terms, on the purpose for which they were assembled, Cucumazin threw out his sentiments, with respect to their future proceedings, in a bold and spirited harangue. "What is it we wait for, friends and countrymen," said he, "that we open not our eyes, to behold the reproach of our nation?—Shall we, who are born to bear arms, and who place our highest honour in the terror with which we inspire our enemies—shall we bend our necks to the disgraceful yoke of a few wandering strangers?—What are all their daring and presumptuous actions, but so many reproaches of our effeminacy, and expressions of that contempt in which they hold us?—Let us but seriously consider what they have achieved in a few days, and we shall be sensible first of our own shame, and next of the obligation we lie under to wipe it off. They have entered triumphantly into the city of Mexico, in despite of our sovereign, and contrary to the inclination of the nobility and the people: they have introduced rebels, and our professed enemies, and kept them in arms before our eyes; thereby exalting the vanity of the Tlascalans, and trampling under foot the glory of the Mexicans: they have taken away the life of a general of the empire, by a public and barbarous execution; audaciously exercising the jurisdiction of magistrates, and the authority of legislators, in dominions wherein they are aliens: they have invaded our temples, and ventured with sacrilegious hands to dislodge our gods, placing their own idols on our altars: and, to complete their enormities, they have presumed to seize, and continue to hold in confinement, the sacred person of our sovereign, which they have dared to load with ignominious fetters!

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“ That these things are so, we are all too well convinced ; but who is so lost to honour as to believe his senses ? — Our gods are insulted, and our sovereign is degraded, while we remain patient and unarmed spectators. That appearance of liberty, which the great Montezuma now enjoys, is only a deceitful transition to a more disgraceful bondage : the strangers have extended their tyranny over his heart, and made themselves masters of his will. They are the men who govern and command us ; for by them all the resolutions of our sovereign, now their prisoner, are directed : to them are sacrificed our religion and laws, and our lives and possessions, we may assuredly expect will soon become their prey. What then remains but to unite our forces, and endeavour to prevent the ruin of the Mexican empire ; accomplish the destruction of these arrogant strangers ; and set our sovereign at liberty.* !”

This speech had the desired effect. Nothing was to be heard through the whole assembly but menaces against the Spaniards, when the cazique of Matalcingo observed, That it would be necessary to acquaint Montezuma of their intentions ; and before they took any violent step, to have his permission. It would be dangerous, he said, to the royal person, to attack the Spanish quarters, without first putting him in a place of security, or at least giving him such information as might enable him to provide for his own safety ; nor would it, in his opinion, exalt their reputation to use violence against strangers, under the protection of their sovereign, until they had given some just provocation, or exhibited stronger proofs of their sinister designs. It was obvious to the whole assembly, that these scruples were thrown in the way of their resolutions from personal jealousy of Cacumazin, who retorted on his arrival with some warmth of expression. Montezuma, he said, would be sensible of the propriety of the remedy, when delivered from the evil : if otherwise, Mexico had men whose temples would very well fit a crown ; and he would not be the first of their kings, who for not knowing how to reign, or by reigning negligently, had let the sceptre drop out of his hands. The opinion of the king of Tezeuco was unanimously embraced †.

Cortez and Montezuma had both notice of this conspiracy almost at the same time ; the emperor from the cazique of Matalcingo, and the general by means of his spies : and when Cortez was going to the royal apartment to communicate his intelligence, he met Montezuma coming on the same errand, who had the good fortune to speak first, clearing himself by that means from all suspicion of being privy to the designs of his nephew. He expressed great indignation against the whole faction, and proposed chastising them with the utmost rigour. In answer to this motion Cortez replied, after letting the emperor understand he was acquainted with the whole affair, that he was sorry to have been the cause of any disturbance among his vassals, and for that reason found himself obliged to take upon him the remedy ; that he was therefore come to ask his majesty's permission to march immediately with his followers to Tezeuco, in order to crush in

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 3. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 2.

† Id. ibid.

embryo a conspiracy that might be attended with consequences fatal to the royal authority, unless suppressed in time. It would be necessary, he said, to seize upon Cacumazin before he could join his confederates, and by that means prevent the effusion of blood.

Montezuma admired the undaunted resolution of the Spanish general, but declined his proposal; saying, it would be a diminution of his power and authority to make use of foreign arms in the chastisement of his own subjects. He therefore entreated Cortez to dissemble his private resentment, and gave it as his solemn opinion, that any hostile attempt from the Spaniards would only serve to increase the hatred of the people, and strengthen the hands of the conspirators, who would soon find another leader, should Cacumazin even be made prisoner. But there was still, he observed, a province in which the general might be instrumental to the restoration of public peace, that of counsellor, and of mediator, should circumstances require any interposition. Cortez acquiesced in his reasons; and Montezuma, by discovering his knowledge of the plot, but pretending to treat the design of his nephew as the effect of youthful levity, threw the conspirators off their guard. Cacumazin was privately seized in his own palace at Tezeuco; and a boat being ready on the lake, was brought, without noise or disturbance, to the Spanish quarters.

Montezuma now discovered all his dissembled rage, or what he was willing should be considered as such, and without permitting Cacumazin to appear before him, commanded that unhappy prince to be confined in the closest prison of the nobles: treating him as a criminal who had committed a capital offence, and was to suffer punishment. But Cortez seized this opportunity of rendering himself popular among the Mexicans, by relaxing the rigour of the sentence. There was at that time in Mexico a brother of Cacumazin, a young man of great merit, and universally esteemed, but persecuted by the king of Tezeuco, on account of some family jealousies. On him the general cast his eyes, as a proper instrument for his purpose, and proposed to the emperor to give him the investiture of Tezeuco, since his brother had rendered himself incapable of resuming the government, by conspiring against his sovereign; adding, that it would not be safe to punish a delinquent of so much interest as Cacumazin with the loss of life, at a time when the minds of the nobles were in such commotion; that depriving him of his dominions would consign him to a kind of political death, less noisy, yet sufficiently severe, to strike terror into his accomplices; and that this young prince (whom he hoped to rule) was in all respects more worthy of the dignity of first elector of the empire.

Montezuma was so highly pleased with this thought, that he immediately proposed it to his council, who applauded the motion as merciful and equitable; and the ministers framed a royal decree, by which Cacumazin was deprived, according to the custom of the country, of all his honours and dignities, and his brother appointed his successor. The emperor now ordered the new king into his presence, and during the time of the investiture, which had its ceremonies and solemnities, told him, that he owed all his good fortune to the mediation

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mediation of the strangers; giving the nobility to understand, that the lenity of the punishment inflicted on Cacumazin proceeded from the same cause. Every one applauded a moderation, so contrary to the usual severity shewn by Montezuma on such occasions: the superior judgment of the Spaniards was acknowledged; and the very novelty of punishing rebellion without bloodshed produced such extraordinary effects, that all the troops in arms for Cacumazin instantly dispersed, and the confederate caziques submitted themselves without hesitation to the royal clemency. They received pardon, through the interposition of Cortez, who now found himself not only delivered from a storm that threatened to overwhelm him, but supported by a new stock of friends and consequence *. Montezuma was indebted to him for the tranquillity of his realm, the first prince in the empire for his dignity, and a great body of the nobility for their lives.

This conspiracy, notwithstanding the fortunate circumstances that accompanied its extinction, left impressions on the mind of Montezuma by no means favourable to the designs of Cortez. He was too well acquainted with the motives of his nephew's conduct, not to feel uneasiness at his fate; and with the genuine patriotism which warmed the breast of that young prince, though his condition obliged him to conceal his sentiments, and to treat an attempt to free Mexico from the usurpation of the Spaniards, as rebellion against the sovereign. On examining coolly into the behaviour of Cortez he found something mysterious in his long residence in his dominions, and in that authority which he assumed, so incompatible with the character of an ambassador. He began to be ashamed of the general reflections on his want of spirit and resolution, in suffering himself to be confined and wholly governed by the strangers. These were some of the arguments urged by Cacumazin for taking up arms: Montezuma himself was sensible there was but too much occasion for murmuring; and as the same reasons still subsisted, he was apprehensive of fresh disturbances, which might terminate in the exaltation of another prince to the throne. The applause bestowed on the late sentence might be intended to cover farther designs, and to lull the government into security: at any rate there was danger from the hidden sparks of a fire lately extinguished, of which even the Spaniards themselves might take advantage, in order to enlarge their power, and extend their influence over the Mexicans; a purpose which could not be effected without a diminution of the royal prerogative †.

These considerations made Montezuma resolve to get rid as soon as possible of the Spaniards; and to intimate to Cortez, that he was ready to execute every thing relative to the object of his embassy. It was some time before the emperor could prevail on himself to make this proposal, or could meet with a proper opportunity of introducing the subject. One day, however, when the general came to visit him, having overcome his irresolution, he introduced a discourse concerning the Catholic king, and said he had been thinking of making a voluntary ac-

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 3. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 2.
lib. iv. c. 3. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 3.

† Herrera, dec. II.

knowledge of that vassalage which was due to the monarch of the East, as successor of Quezalcoal, and proprietary-lord of his dominions; for which purpose he intended to assemble the princes and nobles of the realm, and to make this acknowledgment in their presence, that they might all after his example pay obedience, and establish the vassalage by some contribution to the new sovereign. He had already, he added, provided abundance of gold and jewels of inestimable value, in order to discharge the obligation on his own part; and he was persuaded that his people would contribute, on theirs, such a present as would be worthy of the great Eastern prince, as the first tribute of the Mexican empire*.

By this artful proposal Montezuma entirely concealed his design from Cortez; and actually persuaded that profound politician, that he had no other motive for this extraordinary resolution, than a superstitious compliance with the intention of the ancient prophecies, which he now regarded as fulfilled. The general returned his most grateful thanks, highly pleased with having obtained more than he thought practicable in his present circumstances; little imagining that this was a snare laid by the emperor, in order to oblige him to declare his ultimate designs, in the fullest manner, or to quit the Mexican dominions. On the contrary, he hoped, that this extraordinary condescension would enable him to secure his residence in the capital, till further orders were received from Spain, and such a reinforcement as would be sufficient for the actual conquest of the empire, should it be necessary to have recourse to violence. But Montezuma, who had very different views, immediately issued convocatory orders to the caziques and chief men of his empire, as was customary when any affair of more than ordinary importance was to be discussed, omitting to cite such as lived at a great distance, that no time might be lost in a matter that required dispatch. They arrived in a few days; and being assembled in the emperor's apartment, together with the nobles and ministers that resided in Mexico, Cortez and his principal officers also being present, in their richest apparel, Montezuma ascended his throne, and making a sign with his hand to enjoin silence, began a premeditated speech, in which he endeavoured by the most soothing expressions to conciliate the favour of the caziques. He reminded them of the many proofs he had given them of his affection, and that they held their dignities from his bounty; thence inferring the improbability of his making any proposal to them incompatible with their interest, or the honour and dignity of his crown. He next introduced a short account of the origin of the Mexican empire; the expedition of the Navatlaques; the extraordinary achievements of Quezalcoal; the prophecy which he left, when he departed for the conquest of the East, foretelling, by the impulse of Heaven, that his descendants should return to govern the kingdoms of the West. He represented it as a point indisputable, that the king of Spain, who ruled in those Eastern regions, was the lawful successor of Quezalcoal: whence he concluded, that they ought, in his person, unanimously to acknowledge the right of blood,

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 3.

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the crown being only disposed of by election, those many years, for want of such right : and, for his own part, he was so great a lover of justice, that had this monarch come in person, whereas he had only sent his ambassador, he would have been willing to strip himself of his dignity, and lay the crown at the feet of the rightful heir, to be disposed of at his pleasure. But as it was otherwise, he was happy in at least knowing to whom his homage was due, and was resolved to be the first to express his satisfaction at the completion of the ancient prophecy, by yielding a ready obedience. For this purpose, he added, he had selected his most valuable treasures, to be delivered as a proof of his vassalage ; and hoped that his nobles would follow his example, not only in making the same acknowledgment of fealty, but in accompanying it with a proportional present, that their submission might appear with more lustre in the eyes of the descendant of Quezalcoal.

This speech, though only designed to serve a temporary purpose, abounded with so many humiliating expressions, and required a demeanour so repugnant to the nature of Montezuma, that he sometimes paused, as if at a loss for utterance, and at others the tears trickled down his cheeks. The Mexicans, sensible of the cause of his perturbation, were affected with the keenest sorrow ; and when he concluded his discourse, a deep silence ensued. The whole assembly was struck dumb with grief, indignation, and surprise. These emotions began to vent themselves in a hollow murmur of rage, not without some symptoms of violence, when Cortez seasonably interposed, by saying, That it was not the intention of the king his master to deprive Montezuma of the royal dignity, or to alter the government or laws of the Mexican empire ; his sole purpose being, that the right of succession, which he might perhaps never claim, should be settled on his descendants. This assurance somewhat quieted the minds of the Mexicans, but the proposal by which it was followed filled them with astonishment. They looked on each other, without daring either to contradict, or to give any sign of consent ; being afraid that, by doing either, they should but confirm the emperor the more in his strange determination. This hesitation lasted till the prime minister, who was perfectly acquainted with the will of the prince, took upon him to speak for the rest. All the nobles, who composed that assembly, respected Montezuma, he said, as their lord and natural sovereign, and were ready to obey what he had been pleased to propose, and to follow any example he should think fit to set them ; not doubting but he had well weighed the consequences of his resolution, and consulted the gods on an affair of so much moment. A sullen submission was now obtained, and a public instrument framed, with all the necessary formalities, in which Charles V. was acknowledged lawful and hereditary lord of the Mexican empire*.

Montezuma

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 3. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 3. This transaction is somewhat differently related by Dr. Robertson, who represents the proposal of submission as made by Cortez, and reluctantly agreed to by Montezuma ; in proof of which he calls in Montezuma's tears : but why may not princes be able to counterfeit tears, when necessary, as well as persons and players ?

Montezuma.

Montezuma lost no time in bringing his designs to the desired crisis. He immediately delivered the present which he had prepared as the first acknowledgment to his new superior, and transmitted to Cortez the contributions of the nobles, as soon as they arrived. A receiver and treasurer were appointed to take an exact account of every article; and in a few days such a quantity of gold, independent of other valuable materials, was amassed, that, besides many pieces of curious workmanship in that metal, which were preserved, they melted down in bars as much as amounted to six hundred thousand pesos. The soldiers were impatient to have it distributed, and the general complied with their request. Out of the whole one fifth was set apart for the king; and a second fifth was allotted to Cortez, as commander in chief. The general likewise set apart the sum for which he stood accountable to Velasquez, and that which himself and his friends had advanced towards fitting out the armament. The remainder was divided among the officers and soldiers, including those at Villa Rica; and the share of a private man, after all these deductions, was so inconsiderable, that some rejected it with disdain, as no equivalent for their numberless dangers and toils, while others

Montezuma, however, had no occasion to counterfeit. Though he proposed, for the reasons assigned in the narration, to submit to an act of fealty, the performance of it, in presence of his principal nobility, was sufficiently humiliating to excite emotion; especially while he was uncertain, if it would answer the desired end. In acknowledging himself the tributary of the king of Spain, though only to serve a temporary purpose, it was natural that he should feel some of those pangs which pierce the hearts of independent sovereigns, in submitting to a state of vassalage; hence his utterance was interrupted, and his wounded pride discharged itself in tears, whether prompted or involuntary is a matter of little consequence. But the strongest proof of the political purpose of Montezuma in performing this act of submission, is the use which he instantly made of it, in hastening the departure of the Spaniards. He not only required Cortez to quit his dominions, in a tone which he had never before assumed, but had an army ready to enforce his commands, in case of refusal; a measure which could not have been so suddenly adopted, had Montezuma submitted to acknowledge himself the vassal of Charles V. merely to gratify the avarice and ambition of the Spaniards. In order to get over this difficulty, Dr. Robertson transposes the order of events, representing Montezuma's command to Cortez as the effect of the assault upon the Mexican temples; but here he is contradicted by the authority of Herrera, De Solis, and all the most respectable Spanish historians, who are uniform in placing that outrage before the conspiracy of Cacumazin, and which they assign as its cause, in the same manner as they assign the punishment of the king of Tezeuco as the cause of Montezuma's proposal of submission; from a dread that the Spaniards would acquire such an ascendancy in the empire as would entirely annihilate his power, or that his own subjects, roused by his seeming pusillanimity, might again cabal, and place another prince upon the throne. One observation more is necessary. Cortez, in his dispatches, represents the proposal of submission as made by himself; but his testimony, in a matter where his own credit was concerned, ought not to weigh above other evidence corroborated by circumstances. Granting however, what is very improbable, that he did make the proposal, Montezuma was at least ready to receive it, and certainly turned it to his own advantage; the consequences of the act of fealty being entirely different from those which Cortez expected, and which he arrogantly promised himself. The question therefore rests, even after this concession, on the same foundation as if the proposal had come from Montezuma; whose abilities Dr. Robertson has represented as inadequate to such a stroke of policy, without reflecting that occasions make men, and that no man is so stupid as not to discover penetration when his honour and fortune are at stake.

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expressed their disappointment in seditious murmurs*. Cortez, however, soon reconciled them all by liberal presents and promises, and was flattering himself with the hope of being able to continue in his present situation, until he could receive such reinforcements as would enable him to effect the actual subjection of the Mexican empire, when an unexpected message arrived from Montezuma.

Somewhat surprised at this message, and understanding that the emperor had of late held frequent conferences with his nobility and chief priests, Cortez took along with him twelve Spaniards, of different ranks, and endeavoured to suppress that anxiety with which he was agitated. As soon as he entered the royal apartments, he found fresh cause of uneasiness. Montezuma received him with an unusual air of importance and solemnity; and as soon as they had seated themselves, told him, That having now on his own part, and on that of his nobles, complied with the acknowledgement of submission offered in the assembly of the states, it was proper that Cortez should begin to think of his departure, the purpose of his embassy being fully accomplished. "The gods," added he, "are angry with me, for the favour I have shewn to their enemies, and have denied me rain: they threaten to destroy the fruits of my harvests, and to send a pestilence among my people. Ask what you will have more, and I will freely grant it; for I love you, in despite of all that I have suffered: but you must depart. Religion and the voice of my people require this sacrifice; and know, notwithstanding his present condition, (of which, for your sake and my own, I shall say but little) Montezuma has yet courage to command, and power to enforce obedience, to what he thus requests †."

Convinced from the determined tone in which this speech was uttered, that it was the result of some deep-laid scheme between Montezuma and his subjects, Cortez privately dispatched one of his officers to order the Spaniards under arms, before he made his reply. He now fully discovered the meaning of the vassalage and presents offered to the Catholic king, and the first emotion of anger would have impelled him to a resolute defiance; but, on farther reflection, he thought it better to dissemble, and seem to acquiesce in the emperor's resolution, than

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 3. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 4. Those murmurs were partly occasioned by the liberty which Cortez took of rewarding his soldiers according to merit or favour; and even the officers were displeased at the king's fifth being deducted, besides the expence of the armament: but making allowance for all these, and other irregularities, the whole sum amassed fell much short of general expectation, and seems to bear no proportion to the pompous descriptions left us of the ancient splendour of Mexico, or to the immense treasures poured from its mines in modern times. But this apparent contradiction is easily reconciled. The Mexicans had no circulating money; nor were gold and silver, among them, the standards by which the worth of commodities was estimated. Destitute of this commercial value, the demand for the precious metals was small, and the industry and ingenuity of the people in procuring them, was of course proportionably feeble and imperfect. They found enough for the purposes of ornament in a pure metallic state, in the beds of rivers, or at the mouths of mines; and they sought no farther: but what could be so collected was not sufficient to satisfy European avarice; the bowels of the earth must be torn, and those hidden treasures, of which the natives were happily ignorant, be purchased at the expence of their blood.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. vi. c. 3. De Solis,

lib. iv. c. 4.

attempt either to oppose or change it. He therefore answered, That he had already begun to make preparations for returning to his own country; but that some time was requisite for building vessels fit for so tedious a voyage, those in which he arrived being ruined beyond the possibility of repair.

This reply was highly pleasing to Montezuma, who dreaded above all things a rupture with the Spaniards; though it is said he had provided a great army, in order to support his determination, if it had been disputed. He embraced Cortez with particular marks of affection, on finding that every thing flowed in the channel which he desired, and told him in the most obliging manner, That it was not his intention to hasten his departure, without furnishing him with the necessary means; that he should give orders immediately for preparing every thing requisite for building the vessels according to the general's instructions; and that, in the meantime, he might remain in his present situation: it being sufficient to appease the anger of the gods, and quiet the clamours of his subjects, that Cortez had shewn such readiness to obey the commands of the one; and comply with the demands of the other.

Orders were accordingly issued for building the vessels; the departure of the Spaniards was published; and Montezuma made proclamation, that all the carpenters of the neighbouring country should repair to Villa Rica, assigning the places where they were to cut wood, and the towns which were to furnish Indians of burden for carrying it to the dock. Cortez, on his part, affected an outward shew of complaisance: he instantly dispatched the masters and workmen, who had been employed in building the brigantines, and were now well known among the Mexicans. He discoursed publicly with them of the size and quality of the vessels necessary to be constructed, desiring them to make use of the iron work, rigging, and sails of those which were sunk: every thing was disposed as if the voyage had been finally resolved on.

By these means Cortez lulled the Mexicans asleep; quelled their rising murmurs; and reinstated himself in the confidence of Montezuma, without once losing sight of that great object towards which all his schemes were directed. When the builders set out for Villa Rica, he gave private instructions to Martin Lopez, to whom the chief direction was intrusted, That he should endeavour to prolong the work as much as possible; but still with such artful management, that he might not be suspected of delay. The general hoped thus to preserve his station in the capital, till such time as he should receive reinforcements from Spain; and in case the last necessity should force him to leave Mexico, he designed to wait for the answer of his dispatches at Villa Rica, and maintain himself there under the protection of that fortress, and by the arms of his Indian allies, against the power of Montezuma*.

Nor were Cortez's expectations of supplies without foundation. Almost nine months had elapsed since his commissaries, Portocarrero and Montejo, sailed for Spain; and the rich present with which he had accompanied his dispatches, left

* Id. *ibid.*

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him little room to doubt of their favourable reception at court; that his authority would be confirmed, and a body of troops sent to his assistance, sufficient to enable him to complete the subjection of the Mexican empire. But his condition, in the mean time, was insecure and precarious: the jealousy of the Mexicans was roused; and too long a delay, or any suspicion of his farther designs, would blow it at once into a flame. His army was too small to permit him to think of maintaining his station in the capital by force; and should he retire to the coast, he must expose himself to new dangers. He could not apply for recruits to the Spanish settlements in the islands, before he received the king's commission; and should the governor of Cuba hear of his distress, he might be doomed, after all the great actions he had performed, to bear the name and suffer the punishment of a traitor. While he remained in this cruel state of suspense, anxious about the past, and uncertain in regard to the future, another unexpected event disconcerted all his measures, and summoned his courage and prudence to a new trial.

A Mexican courier arrived with advice, that a fleet of eighteen sail had been seen off the coast of St. John de Ulua; and from the painted dispatches, sent by the officers who commanded in that part of the country, they appeared to be Spaniards. Whatever alarming apprehensions this intelligence might raise in the mind of Montezuma, he prudently hid his disquiet; and sending for Cortez, laid the dispatches before him, saying with an air of composure, That now the provision he was making for his voyage would be unnecessary, as some ships of his nation were arrived on the coast in which he might take his passage. Cortez viewed the paintings with more attention than surprise; and though he did not understand the characters which described them, he perceived enough to convince him that the Squadron was Spanish. Nor did he doubt that it was come to his assistance; imagination, which powerfully influences opinion, being easily carried towards that which the heart desires. He concealed his joy, however, from Montezuma, replying coolly, and in general terms, That he would depart immediately, if those ships were bound for any part of the king of Spain's dominions; that he should soon have intelligence from his countrymen at Zempoalla of the destination of this fleet; and then he should be able to judge, whether it would be necessary to proceed in building the vessels.

Montezuma seemed satisfied with this answer; and Cortez, thinking the completion of all his hopes and wishes at hand, hastened to his companions, in order to communicate to them the glad tidings, which were received with transports of mutual congratulation. But their joy was of short continuance. In a few days letters arrived from Sandoval, governor of Villa Rica, with certain information, that the fleet was fitted out by Velasquez, the general's old enemy, and instead of bringing them the aid they expected, was destined for their destruction. This intelligence Cortez received in the presence of Montezuma, and it required his utmost fortitude to conceal the stroke he sustained by so unexpected a turn of fortune. His situation was now truly desperate, being on every side hemmed round by enemies, either secret or avowed. He bravely resolved, however, not to sink

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under his misfortunes, but to exert his abilities to the last, in order to bring all to a happy issue. He concealed his uneasiness from Montezuma; softened the accounts he had received to the Spaniards; and retired to deliberate on the measures necessary to be pursued in circumstances that seemed almost to exclude hope*.

It has been already observed, that Velasquez not only prosecuted his enmity against Cortez with unrelenting rigour, but was furnished with a power of rendering it more effectual, being appointed the king's lieutenant of the island of Cuba, and of all the countries discovered by his means, consequently of New Spain. This high commission elated his pride: all his wrongs appeared before him in a more conspicuous point of view; and as he was fully informed of the proceedings of Cortez, grief, shame, and indignation at once took hold of his heart, and excited him to vindicate his authority by force of arms, and take vengeance on the man who had so grossly over-reached him, and so cruelly betrayed his confidence. The ardour of Velasquez in completing his armament was such as might have been expected from the violence of the passions with which he was agitated. He bought ships, enlisted soldiers, and went in person over the whole island, visiting the dwellings of the Spaniards, and encouraging them to the undertaking, by representing the immense riches that would accrue from the projected conquest, besides the pleasure of punishing a rebel and a traitor. By these means he assembled, in a short time, such a fleet and army, as in that age, and in that part of the world, might be deemed formidable. The fleet consisted of eleven stout vessels, seven of them being larger than brigantines. It had on board fourscore horsemen, eight hundred foot soldiers, of which eighty were musketeers, and an hundred and twenty cross-bowmen, together with twelve pieces of cannon.

As the experience, which he had so dearly bought, of the fatal consequences of committing to another what he ought to have executed himself, had not rendered Velasquez more enterprising, he intrusted the command of this new armament to Pamphilo de Narvaez, a man of reputed abilities, and of great distinction in Cuba, but highly self-opiniated, and obstinate in his resolutions. To this general, whom he dignified with the name of governor of New Spain, taking to himself that of viceroy, Velasquez gave instructions to seize Cortez, and send him prisoner under a strong guard, that he might receive from his hands the just punishment of his treachery and temerity; that his officers should be used in the same manner, in case they appeared obstinately attached to his interest; and that he should take possession, in virtue of the commission conferred upon him, of all the new acquisitions, as being within the jurisdiction of his superior. He never once suffered the possibility of disappointment to enter his thoughts; relying with fond security on the superiority of force, without reflecting on the courage of Cortez, the long practice of his soldiers in arms, or the friendships and alliances which he might have formed†.

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 4.
lib. iv. c. 5.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. vii. c. 4. De Solis,

Some difficulties were thrown in the way of this undertaking, when the fleet was ready to sail. The monks of St. Geronimo, who presided over the royal chamber of audience at St. Domingo, and over all the other islands in the West-Indies, being informed of the preparations of the governor of Cuba, and foreseeing the inconveniences which must result from such a dangerous competition, dispatched Lucas Vazquez Dayllon, one of their number, to dissuade Velasquez from the prosecution of a measure so injurious to the public service; with orders, if he continued obstinate, to exert all the authority of the tribunal, commanding him on the severest penalties to disband his army, unrig his fleet, and refrain from giving molestation to Cortez under any pretext whatsoever; and requiring him, if he had any complaints against that general; or any claim to the country which he was conquering for the king, to appear before the royal tribunal, where he might depend on having justice done to him in a regular way.

On the arrival of this minister in Cuba, he laid his instructions before Velasquez, and used both arguments and entreaties, in order to engage him to desist from his enterprise. These proving ineffectual, he proceeded to menaces, notifications, protests, and the full extent of his powers; but all were not sufficient to stay the resolution of Velasquez, whose honour and fortune, independent of his revenge, were too deeply concerned in the success of the armament to permit him to lay it aside. Dayllon therefore offered to accompany the fleet, under pretence of curiosity, in expectation of being able as every other method had failed, to prevail on the men to obey his orders, or at least to accommodate differences between the parties, before they should come to open hostilities. Nor did Velasquez oppose this proposal, being desirous that the fleet might sail, before the news of his obstinacy could reach St. Domingo. It was no less fortunate for Cortez, that his old friend, Andreo de Duero, secretary to Velasquez, also accompanied this armament, with the generous design of preventing the destruction of a person he esteemed, and of promoting the public service †.

All obstructions being now removed, the fleet set sail; and having a favourable wind, reached in a few days the desired haven. They came to an anchor in the bay of St. Juan de Ulua, where Narvaez sent some of his people ashore to gain intelligence, and make what discoveries they could in the neighbouring villages. These men were so fortunate as to meet with three soldiers, whom Cortez had sent to search for mines in that province, and who readily joined them. From the deserters Narvaez not only received information concerning the progress and situation of Cortez, but as they had acquired some knowledge of the language of the country, he was enabled by their means to hold an intercourse with the natives. In order to procure themselves a favourable reception, they represented the affairs of Cortez as desperate, both in Mexico and at Villa Rica; and Narvaez, in consequence of this intelligence, which increased his natural presumption and confidence, summoned Sandoval to surrender the fortress under his command, and either to join

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 5.

the army with his garrison, or employ it in preserving the settlement for Velasquez. This commission he intrusted to a priest, named Juan Ruis de Guevara, a man of a less gentle temper than his profession required; and who behaved with so much insolence, on the present occasion, that Sandoval, a brave and high spirited officer, zealously attached to Cortez, ordered him and his attendants to be seized, and sent them in chains to Mexico, under the conduct of a Zempoallan guard*.

Meanwhile Cortez had received such intelligence concerning the force and intentions of Narvaez, as gave him a view of his danger in its full extent. Never was there a time when his courage and capacity were so severely put to the test. It was almost impossible to say, what plan he should adopt. On one hand, there was an army, in weapons, valour, and discipline equal to his own; in numbers far superior; acting under the sanction of royal authority, and commanded by an officer of known bravery. It appeared rash in Cortez to think of meeting his rival in the field, with a force so unequal; and should he wait the approach of Narvaez in Mexico, destruction seemed to be inevitable. While the Spaniards pressed him from without, the inhabitants whose jealousy was already roused, and whose turbulent spirit he was with difficulty able to restrain with all his authority and attention, would eagerly seize such a favourable opportunity of avenging all their wrongs. On the other hand, must he at once forego the fruits of so many victories, and augment the power of his mortal enemy, by relinquishing the advantages earned by so many toils and perils? The haughty temper and prosperous circumstances of Narvaez left little room to hope for an accommodation, should Cortez even stoop to make concessions, and the thoughts of a surrender were worse than death.

But amid all these various aspects of danger and difficulty, which presented themselves to the view of Cortez, he found nothing more distressing, than that security and content which he was obliged to feign, by exhibiting a calm and cheerful countenance, while his spirit was oppressed, and his breast agitated by a variety of contending passions. It was of the utmost consequence to conceal from the Mexicans, that the Spaniards were at variance among themselves: Cortez therefore told Montezuma, That Narvaez was a second ambassador arrived from the king of Spain, to support the proposition which he had formerly made; that he was come with an army, according to the custom of his country; but as every thing was already adjusted, he would endeavour to prevail on him to return, and would himself take his passage on board this fleet, as Montezuma's generosity had left him nothing farther to desire. Nor was it less necessary for Cortez to conceal his chagrin and uneasiness from his own troops, lest their spirits might sink under the greatness and complication of the danger. He intimated the probability that Narvaez would come to an accommodation, and prefer his own interest, and the service of his sovereign, to the absurd revenge of

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vii. c. 4. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 5. They were carried on the shoulders of Indians of burden, and reached Mexico in four days. Herrera, ut supra.

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à private man, blinded by passion, pride, and animosity; and, in his own opinion, he said, he had reason to thank Velasquez for sending him so seasonable a reinforcement, as he had not the least doubt but he should be able to make fellow-soldiers and companions of those, who had come against him with hostile intentions. He concealed, even from his officers, his real sentiments in regard to the probability of success, though he laid before them the state of affairs, and desired their advice how to act, after having disposed their minds to his own way of thinking. It was the unanimous resolution of the council of war, That proposals of accommodation should immediately be offered to Narvaez, and that in the mean time preparations should be made, as if there was a certainty of the proposals being rejected*.

Such were the measures concerted, and carrying into execution, when the Spanish prisoners, sent by Sandoval, arrived. Cortez went out to receive them with a numerous retinue; ordered their fetters to be taken off; embraced them with marks of affection, and told the licentiate Guevara, That he would chastise Sandoval for the little regard he had shewn to his person and function. He afterwards conducted Guevara to his own apartment; admitted him to his table; and with seeming satisfaction expressed several times, how much he esteemed the happiness of having his old friend Narvaez in that country, on account of the particular intimacy that had subsisted between them. He took care that his people should all appear cheerful and gay before the licentiate: he made him a witness of the favours he received from Montezuma, and of the great respect with which he was treated by the Mexican nobility: he made him a present of some valuable jewels, which greatly mollified the violence of his temper; and he privately hinted, that he might tell the chief men of Narvaez's army, that there was immense wealth in Mexico, which he would be glad to share with them. He treated the other prisoners in the same manner; and without seeming to practise on their integrity, he dispatched them in four days fully persuaded by his arguments, and attached to his person by his liberality and courteous behaviour†.

Three days after the departure of Guevara and his companions, Cortez, though convinced that the contest must be terminated finally by arms, dispatched father Olmedo with such proposals to Narvaez as seemed reasonable, and no less conducive to their common interest, than to the honour and glory of the crown of Spain. With Olmedo, whose abilities qualified him for such a negotiation, and whose character was well suited to those secret intrigues in which Cortez placed his chief hopes of success, he also sent letters to the licentiate Vasquez Dayllon, and to his old friend Andres de Duero, accompanied with valuable presents in gold, besides what he gave to the crafty priest to be distributed as he should think proper. The letter to Narvaez contained an account of the progress which Cortez had made in the intended conquest, and represented the fatal

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 6.
lib. iv. c. 6.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. vii. c. 4. De Solis,

consequences to both of giving the Mexicans, a warlike and powerful people, reason to believe that discord prevailed among the Spaniards: the general likewise told his rival, That it was absolutely necessary he should acquaint him with the nature of his instructions, and the authority whence they were derived; for if they came from the king, or tended to promote the public service, he was ready to surrender his commission, deliver up the truncheon, with the army under his command, and contribute his assistance in a private station: but if they were dictated by the private resentment of Velasquez, that both ought to consider, with equal attention, how much they hazarded by obedience in a case where the pretensions of a subject ought to yield to the interests of the sovereign; adding, that he meant to satisfy all the legal demands of Velasquez, and to divide with him not only the wealth but the glory of the conquest: and he concluded with observing, That he did not make use of arguments because he wanted force, but from a sincere desire of terminating matters in an amicable way*.

Having taking these conciliatory measures, Cortez began next to pursue such steps as seemed necessary for his safety. He sent to his friends at Tlascala, desiring the republic to provide six thousand men, to attend him on an enterprise in which he might possibly have occasion for their service. He likewise sent an officer into the province of Chinantla, the inhabitants of which were brave and warlike, and enemies to the Mexicans, in order to dispose the caziques, who had secretly offered obedience to the Spaniards, to raise two thousand men, and have them ready to march on a short notice. He even condescended to imitate the arms of this people. Having observed that they used spears of extraordinary length and force, he immediately conceived that such weapons, the best perhaps ever contrived for defence, might serve to break the impression of Narvaez's cavalry, which gave him no small uneasiness; he therefore ordered three hundred to be procured, and armed, for want of iron, with tempered copper, instead of the flints used by the natives. These he distributed among his men, and taught them that deep and compact arrangement, which the use of such a formidable weapon enabled them to assume†.

Meanwhile Narvaez, having taken possession of Zempoalla, was using every method in his power to ruin the reputation of his adversary among the natives. He represented Cortez and his followers as fugitives and out-laws, guilty of rebellion against their own sovereign, and of injustice in invading the dominions of other princes; declaring, that his sole purpose in visiting that country was to punish these licentious Spaniards, and rescue the inhabitants from oppression. Narvaez even found means to convey the same unfavourable representations to Montezuma, assuring him, That the conduct of those who kept him under restraint was highly displeasing to the king his master; and that he had it in charge not only to rescue an injured monarch from confinement, but to reinstate him in the possession of his ancient power and independence‡. But the rapacity of the

* Id. *ibid.*† Ut *supra*.‡ *Herrera*, dec. II. lib. vii. c. 4.*Robertson*, *Hist. Amer.* book v.

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followers of Narvæz, not only prevented his flattering declarations from having any influence on the minds of the Zempoallans, but made them the objects of universal odium; and though Montezuma was surprised at the assurances sent him, he appears to have paid little regard to them, notwithstanding his ardent desire of liberty, and the uneasiness which he had already discovered at the delay of Cortez. If he believed Narvæz, as is not impossible, a person superior in power to Cortez, he perhaps considered him as on that very account more dangerous, and therefore declined his assistance. Willing, however, to conciliate his good will, lest he might have occasion to implore his clemency, the emperor sent him a considerable present, accompanied with such expressions of civility as were customary on the arrival of strangers*.

In those defamatory practices, which might have proved no less injurious to the interests of his country, than to the reputation of Cortez, was Narvæz employed, when Guevara returned from Mexico, with an account of the magnificence of that city; the grandeur of Montezuma; his esteem for Cortez; the great merit of that general; and the politeness with which he had treated him and his fellow prisoners. He commended the prudence of Cortez in desiring to conceal from the Mexicans that any cause of dispute subsisted among the Spaniards, and expatiated so largely in his praise, that Narvæz thrust him rudely from his presence, desiring him to return to Mexico, and adulate the man he so much admired. On this affront the priest and his companions sought a new auditory, passing to the assemblies of the soldiers, where they were listened to with more attention. After relating the story of their journey, they displayed their rich presents among those needy adventurers; and inspired, what was of the utmost consequence to Cortez, a general inclination for peace, and a very high opinion of his valour and generosity.

Father Olmedo arrived seasonably to stamp deeper the impression made by Guevara. He delivered his instructions with an air of confidence softened by humility, and seconded them with an oration equally eloquent and substantial. He began with putting Narvæz in mind of the duty imposed by his function, as a Christian priest, to interpose in all such differences, endeavouring to display the sincerity of Cortez's heart, as an eye-witness of all his proceedings: he next assured him, That it would be no difficult matter to obtain any thing he should propose, provided it was reasonable, and conducive to the public service; representing the hazard that both ran by such misunderstandings, and the advantage which would accrue to Velásquez, if Narvæz would co-operate with Cortez, in order to complete the conquest: and he concluded with observing, That Narvæz, having an army at his command, ought to weigh its destination with the present posture of affairs; a point which must be presupposed in his instructions, it being always left to the discretion of the general to chuse the means by which he might accomplish the end proposed by any armament, left in the execution of absolute orders, by the change of times and circumstances, he should defeat their intention.

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 7.

The answer of Narvaez was precipitate and confused. It was inconsistent, he said, with the character of Velasquez to treat with a rebellious subject, whose chastisement was the first and principal business of the army he had under his command; that he would immediately proclaim as traitors all who espoused the interest of that rebel; and that he had brought with him sufficient force to snatch the conquest out of the hands of Cortez, without having occasion for the advice of those, who being equally guilty, had an equal interest in preventing the execution of justice. The reverend father replied with moderation and address, but without effect; he therefore proceeded to execute the other part of his instructions. He visited the secretary Duero, and the licentiate Dayllon, whom he found extremely well disposed towards a reconciliation. They even promised to assist, with all their influence, the purport of his dispatches, and loudly condemned the inexorable severity and injudicious vehemence of Narvaez. Olmedo afterwards visited the officers and soldiers of his acquaintance; published his commission; endeavoured to support the good intentions of Cortez, and to gain them to his interest, by a pompous display of his valour, humanity, justice, and generosity; delivered his presents with judgment, and had reason to hope he should be able to form a large party in favour of an accommodation, when Narvaez, having notice of what was practising in the camp, ordered the priest to be brought before him, abused him as a mutinous and seditious traitor, threatened him with imprisonment, and commanded him instantly to leave Zempoalla*.

Vasquez Dayllon, deputy from the royal chamber of audience at St. Domingo, as already observed, was no sooner informed of this matter, than he proposed that a council of war should be held, before the departure of father Olmedo, in order to deliberate on a proper answer to the embassy sent by Cortez, as he seemed sincerely inclined to peace, and it appeared to be no difficult undertaking to establish it on terms advantageous to all. In this proposition he was seconded by some of the principal officers: but Narvaez, at once to put a stop to all such proceedings, made a solemn declaration of war against Cortez, pronouncing him a rebel and a traitor to the king, and offering a considerable reward to any one who should either seize or kill him. He at the same time ordered the army to be in readiness to march, and this declaration to be proclaimed at the head of the troops. Enraged at such violent measures, Dayllon resolved to exert that authority with which he was vested: he commanded the crier to desist, and publicly prohibited Narvaez to stir from Zempoalla, under pain of death, or employ his forces against their friends and countrymen, without the unanimous consent of the army. He enjoined the officers and soldiers not to obey him in shedding the blood of their fellow subjects, and persisted with so much resolution in enforcing his commands, that Narvaez, forgetting all regard to his public character, ordered him to be seized, and carried on board a vessel destined for the island of Cuba.

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. vii. c. 4. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 6.

† Id. ibid.

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Sensible that he could now expect no farther answer, and that his person was even in danger, father Olmedo left the camp of Narvaez, much mortified at the little success of his negociation, and yet more at the insolent contempt with which he had been treated; and this contempt, together with the violence offered to Dayllon, had such an effect on the army, that a general dissatisfaction soon appeared, both among officers and soldiers. Even those who had no regard for Cortez, were incensed at the blind and impetuous resentment of Narvaez; and when once their own general had forfeited their esteem, it was an easy transition to bestow it on his more brilliant rival. Accordingly some of the soldiers deserted, and joined the garrison of Villa Rica; while others, by their murmurings, sufficiently discovered their dislike to the cause in which they were engaged*.

The ill success of Olmedo's negociation did not in the least surprise Cortez: it only confirmed him in the opinion which he had formed of the untractable arrogance of Narvaez; and the information which he received from that venerable ecclesiastic of the discontents in the army of his rival, inspired him with the most sanguine hopes. He assembled his officers, communicated to them his information, and his own thoughts on the state of affairs. They deliberated in a body, without leaving the apartment; and after weighing the inconveniencies on all sides, it was determined to take the field with what troops they could safely withdraw from Mexico, and with these to march towards Zempoalla, but without abandoning all hopes of an accommodation. They designed to halt in some confederate town, in order to make a second declaration of their pacific inclinations; and where they would have the double advantage of treating with arms in their hands, and of receiving such of Narvaez's people as might be disposed to join them. This resolution was immediately published among the soldiers, and received with applause and cheerfulness. They were not ignorant of the vast inequality of numbers between them and their adversaries; yet were they so far from discovering any signs of fear, so great was their confidence in their leader, that Cortez found it necessary to exert all his authority, in order to oblige such a number as was requisite to remain in Mexico†.

The general's next care was to acquaint Montezuma of his intended journey, but conceal from him its cause. For this purpose he repaired to the emperor's apartment, and told him, That the Spanish captain who lately arrived at Zempoalla, had given some proofs of a disorderly passion, occasioned chiefly by misinformation, which made it necessary for him to march thither with part of his forces, in order to prevent the bad consequences that might ensue from such false representations, by disposing the mind of that officer and his troops to respect the Mexicans, as a people now under the protection of the king of Spain: that he would immediately set out on his journey, lest the approach of an army, so little disciplined, into the neighbourhood of the capital, might occasion some disturbance among the vassals of his imperial majesty. After this artful manner did

* Ut supra.

† De Solis, lib iv. c. 7.



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Cortez endeavour to disguise the dispute between himself and Narvaez; and Montezuma, who was already informed of the violences exercised by the Spaniards at Zempoalla, greatly applauded his design, and offered him his assistance, in case Narvaez continued refractory. Cortez thanked him for the friendly offer; but as he placed little confidence in the Mexicans, he declined the succours, not chusing to admit suspicious auxiliaries among his brave and faithful veterans *.

Having thus paved the way for his march, Cortez began to make the necessary preparations, and take such steps as seemed requisite for his future security and success. He committed the care of Mexico, with all the treasures which he had amassed, and what was of still greater importance, the person of the captive monarch, to an hundred and fifty Spaniards, under the command of Pedro de Alvarado, an officer of distinguished merit, an expert courtier, and who stood high in the favour of Montezuma. This officer he charged to be so assiduous in his civilities to the emperor, as to render him insensible of his confinement; and he strictly enjoined the soldiers to observe the most exact discipline, to yield implicit obedience to their commander, and to shew kindness to the Mexicans in general, but especially to the attendants on the court. He sent orders to Sandoval to meet him, with all the Spaniards under his command; or to wait for him at the place where he designed to halt, leaving the fortress of Villa Rica to the care of the confederate Indians. He next went to take leave of Montezuma, who promised to remain quietly in the Spanish quarters, and to cultivate the same friendship with Alvarado which he had hitherto uniformly maintained with Cortez, again renewing his offer of assistance †.

The general next morning began his march, following the road of Cholula, with all that caution which the security of the army required, and which custom had now made easy to the soldiers, grown perfect by long experience in the practice of war, inured to the hardships which attend it, and accustomed to obey without murmuring or disputing. He was received in that city with a cheerful welcome, and thence proceeded for Tlascala; on the way to which he was met by a splendid embassy from the republic, and conducted into the capital amid the acclamations of the people, who now considered him as the conqueror of Mexico, and the tamer of the haughty spirit of Montezuma. The six thousand auxiliaries desired were raised; but understanding that they were to fight against another body of Spaniards, the greater part of them deserted within a few leagues of the town, and Cortez dismissed the rest, lest they should misbehave, when defection might be attended with more dangerous consequences ‡.

Soon after Cortez left Tlascala, he was joined by Sandoval, and the garrison of Villa Rica, when mustering his army, he found that it consisted of no more than two hundred and seventy-six Spaniards, including officers. With this small but firm battalion, he determined without fear to face the enemy; but as he was still

* *Id. ibid.*† *Herrera dec. II. lib. vii. c. 4. viii. c. 1. De Solis, lib. iv.*

c. 7.

‡ *Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 1.*

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desirous to justify his conduct, and avoid, if possible, the effusion of blood, he dispatched rather Olmedo a second time, with as moderate proposals as his pride would permit him to offer. Olmedo, however, meeting with no better success than in his former negotiation, Cortez appointed Juan Velasquez de Leon to wait on Narvaez; imagining the mediation of that gentleman, who was a near relation of the governor of Cuba, might be better accepted. On the approach of Velasquez to Zempoalla, it was generally believed he had relinquished the interest of Cortez, and was come to enlist under the banners of his kinsman; an opinion which gained so much credit, that Narvaez went out with a numerous retinue to receive him. But that general was soon undeceived. Velasquez boldly declared the purpose of his visit; and enforced his commission with so much warmth, strenuously vindicating the character of Cortez, that Narvaez broke off the conference abruptly, and dismissed him without an answer.

This mark of disrespect, to a person of so much consequence as Velasquez, gave umbrage to many of Narvaez's officers, who insisted that his proposals ought to have been candidly listened to, and an answer favourable or otherwise returned; it being very improbable that a person of so much honour and sincerity would have come with preposterous and unreasonable propositions. These discourses passed from the officers to the soldiers, who became so clamorous, that Narvaez was obliged to promise, in order to quiet them, that a person should be sent to Cortez, in his own name, and in that of the whole army, to apologize for the disrespect shewn to Velasquez, and inquire into the substance and purport of his commission. For this service the secretary Duero was unanimously chosen, as a person in whom both the malcontents and those who were averse to an accommodation could equally confide.

Duero was received by Cortez with all the respect due to his character, his known moderation, and the friendship which he had always professed for that commander. Several conferences were held on the subject of his commission, and every expedient for overcoming the obstinacy of Narvaez was canvassed. Cortez is reported to have gone so far, as to offer to relinquish the Mexican expedition to his competitor, and go with his followers in pursuit of other conquests. But this concession Duero refused to accept, as too liberal; proposing in its stead an interview between the two generals, which he hoped might terminate in a more equitable treaty. The proposition was readily accepted by Cortez; and Narvaez proceeded such a length as even to name the place, time, and circumstances of the meeting, at the very moment that he was contriving an ambuscade for his rival. Of this treachery Cortez had notice from Duero, and was so much stung at the unmanly baseness, that he instantly communicated his discovery to Narvaez, declaring that he now renounced all thoughts of accommodation, and remitted his farther satisfaction to the decision of the sword. The insidious designs of his rival served only to animate his courage, and inspire him with fresh hopes, instead of rousing uneasy apprehensions; for he very justly concluded, that an officer who endeavoured to purchase victory at the expence of his

his honour, could have no great dependance on his own abilities, or the valour and attachment of his troops *.

Cortez now pursued his march with uncommon expedition, and took his station within a league of Zempoalla, in a place where he knew he could not be attacked, his front being defended by the river de Canoas, and his rear by the territory of Villa Rica. No sooner was Narvaez informed of the approach of his rival, than he drew out his troops, with an eagerness and confidence of victory bordering on confusion. He commanded war to be proclaimed anew; set a price on the head of Cortez and some of his principal officers; then disposing his army in order of battle, he marched about a mile, and halted at a convenient post, vainly imagining that Cortez would attack him in the open field, and afford him all the advantage which he must derive from superiority of numbers. Obstinately persisting in this opinion, he continued in his post the whole day; but towards the going down of the sun, the sky grew dark and lowering, and the clouds poured down such a torrent of rain, that the raw soldiers clamoured loudly, and demanded to return to their quarters. The officers likewise became impatient, and expressed their contempt of that handful of men, from the dread of which they were exposed to so many inconveniencies; their general being no less presumptuous, it was unanimously resolved to return to Zempoalla †.

Narvaez, however, would not suffer his forces to separate that night, but lodged them in the principal temple of the city. This temple, which was seated on an eminence, and sufficiently capacious to lodge the whole army, consisted of three towers, or chapels, at a small distance from each other, and which were ascended by many ill contrived steps that added to the security of the height. The rails at the foot of the stairs Narvaez fortified with his artillery. For himself he chose the middle tower, to which he retired with some of his principal officers, and about an hundred soldiers in whose fidelity he could confide. The rest of his troops he lodged in the two side towers; after sending out a party of horse to scour the neighbourhood, and posting two centinels at the avenues. These precautions being taken, Narvaez thought himself secure, and the night was devoted to sleep.

Of this security Cortez had information from his friend Duero; in order, as is said, that he might pass the night more composedly, rather than with any intention to excite him to new designs. But whatever might be the motive for such notice, Cortez determined as soon as he received it, to lay hold of the favourable opportunity which it invited him to mark with success. He immediately assembled his troops, and observed with particular satisfaction, that they were still active and fit for service, though the tempest continued with excessive violence, and they had no tents or other covering to shield themselves from its rage. Inured to toils, these hardy veterans obeyed without once com-

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* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 8, 9.
lib. iv. c. 9.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 1. De Solis,

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plaining, or inquiring the cause of so unexpected a motion : so great was their confidence in their leader !—Having passed the river de Canoas with difficulty, the water almost reaching to their chins, Cortez addressed them in a short speech, in which he made them acquainted with the design of the march ; the situation of the enemy ; the facility with which they might be attacked ; the great probability of victory, and the powerful motives which they had to urge them on to a desperate effort of valour.

“ This night, my friends,” said he, “ this night hath Heaven vouchsafed to put into our hands the most favourable opportunity that desire itself could frame : this night shall you be witnesses of the great confidence which I repose in your courage ; and I am bound to confess, that it is your known valour alone which inspires me with the bold resolution. A few hours ago we expected the enemy in our camp, in hopes of vanquishing them by the advantage of this river, which we have passed with so much difficulty and danger ; now we have them supinely careless, disunited and unarmed, the very contempt in which they hold us fighting on our side. From the shameful impatience with which they quitted the field, flying from the inclemency of the night, a slight inconveniency of nature ! we may readily gather what use those men will make of that ease which they sought with such pusillanimous weakness, and enjoy without fear or suspicion : they will devote it to sleep. Narvaez is a stranger to that vigilance which the accidents of war render necessary : his soldiers are, in general, men picked up in haste, who have never seen service, and will find it no easy matter to assume their arms, and rally in the obscurity of night, when the surprise and terror of an unexpected attack will more than compensate for our inferiority in numbers. Many of them are dissatisfied with the conduct of their commander ; nor are there wanting some who favour our party, and not a few who hold this war in detestation : but both the one and the other must be treated like enemies, till they declare themselves ; for should they overcome us, we shall share the fate of rebels and traitors. They come to take from you all that you have acquired : they aspire at no less than to be the absolute lords of your liberties, lives, and hopes. They will call our victories theirs, theirs the land which you have conquered, at the expence of your sweat and your blood, and theirs the glory of your heroic exploits. The only way to prevent these evils, is to behave yourselves this night with your wonted intrepidity. You are better able to execute than I am to dictate : hold fast your arms, and forget not your custom of conquering. I will be your inseparable companion in all the danger, and seek less to encourage you by my words than to persuade you by my example*.”

The troops were so much inflamed by this speech, that Cortez found occasion to moderate their ardour, by reminding them of the importance of exact discipline and coolness in action. They all acknowledged the wisdom of his resolution, and expressed their determination to conquer, or die fighting by his side : some even went so far, as to desire him to take heed not to be ensnared by any

* Id. *ibid.*

terms ; for if he offered to think of an accommodation, they would instantly withdraw their obedience. Cortez was rather pleased than offended at this freedom, and without loss of time divided his men into three bodies, which were to succeed each other in the assault. At the head of the first he placed Sandoval, with instructions to take possession of the stairs of the temple, and frustrate the use of the enemy's artillery, dividing his men in such a manner as to interrupt the communication between the two towers on the sides ; the second he intrusted to Christoval de Olid, with orders to invest the middle tower, where Narvaez was lodged, and if possible to seize his person. Cortez himself commanded the third, and smallest division, which was to act as a body of reserve, and to assist the other two as occasion should require. The word, or signal, was the Holy Ghost, and the general order profound silence, till such time as the assault was made ; when the drums were commanded to beat, and the other warlike instruments to sound, that so unexpected a noise might strike terror into the enemy, and increase their confusion.

These commands being issued, Cortez continued his march in a slow pace, that the troops might be less fatigued when they arrived at Zempoalla, and the enemy sunk in more profound repose. But before he had proceeded above half a league, his scouts returned with one of Narvaez's centinels, whom they had made prisoner, and informed him that the other had made his escape. This accident destroyed the hope of finding a sleeping enemy ; Cortez, therefore, ordered the troops to quicken their pace, that he might at least arrive before his rival had time to make a proper disposition. They now advanced with the utmost expedition ; and when they came near the town, they left their horses, baggage, and other incumbrances, at a brook a little out of the road. But the centinel, whose fear lent him wings, arrived some minutes before them, and instantly gave the alarm, calling out with a loud voice, " The enemy is upon us ! "—Those who were most alert betook themselves to arms, and brought the centinel before Narvaez ; who after asking him some questions, treated his intelligence with derision, holding it impossible that Cortez, with his small battalion, should have the presumption to attack him in his quarters, or that he could pass the river, and continue his march in a night so dark and tempestuous*.

Cortez reached Zempoalla a little past midnight, and had the good fortune to escape the body of cavalry sent to scour the country. He entered the town, and arrived at the temple, without being challenged by any of the enemy's outguards. The signal for the assault was instantly given ; and Sandoval and his party were mounting the steps, according to their instructions, before they were discovered. Some of the men belonging to the artillery now heard the noise ; and one cannon was fired, which killed two of Cortez's men, and spread a general alarm, but the rest rushed on with such impetuosity, that the other guns could not be discharged. This alarm was immediately succeeded by the noise of drums and confused voices. Those who were nearest at hand repaired to the defence of

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 1. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 9, 10.

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the stairs; the opposition increased; and Sandoval would have found it impossible to succeed in the execution of his orders, by reason of the disadvantage of the ground, and the superior numbers of the enemy, had he not been opportunely supported by the second division under Christoval de Olid, and by Cortez in person; who, leaving his rear formed, flung himself sword in hand into the hottest part of the engagement. His troops, animated by his voice and example, soon drove the enemy from their artillery. Some fled to their quarters, others repaired to the gate of the principal tower, where the dispute again began, and was continued for some time with equal courage on both sides. Narvaez, no less brave in action than arrogant in temper, had armed himself in haste, and was encouraging his men to a vigorous defence, when one of Cortez's soldiers set fire to the reeds with which the tower was covered, and obliged him to fall out. In the first encounter he was struck in the eye by a spear, and falling on the ground, was dragged down the steps, and instantly clapt in fetters. The cry of victory resounded among the troops of Cortez: their enemies were seized with fear and consternation; and all who had sallied out with their leader, threw down their arms, and demanded quarter. The two towers on the sides were still, however, un-reduced, and the officers who there commanded seemed determined on a desperate resistance; but the darkness was so great that they could not distinguish their friends from their enemies; their own artillery was turned against them; and wherever they cast their eyes, they beheld lights gleaming through the obscurity of night, which though proceeding only from a kind of glow-worms, their affrighted imaginations represented as the lighted matches, fire-locks being then unknown, of numerous files of musketeers*. The soldiers, under the influence of this apprehension, obliged their officers to capitulate, and all submitted to the conquerors before morning.

This important victory was gained with the loss of only four soldiers on the side of Cortez, and two wounded. The enemy had two officers and fifteen private men killed, with near double that number wounded. Cortez immediately issued a proclamation, in order to quiet the minds of his prisoners, offering them liberty to return to Cuba, or to enlist themselves in his army, and share his fortune, as they should think most eligible. He waited on Narvaez, whose wound he had ordered to be dressed, and who said, on his approach, in a tone of insult, "You have reason, my lord Cortez, to value yourself on your good fortune." The general replied with an air of contempt, "That he might consider this victory as one of the least considerable actions which he had performed since his arrival in New Spain. Notwithstanding this severity, he gave orders that Narvaez, and all the prisoners, should be humanely treated, but diligently guarded, lest the small number of their conquerors should animate them to fresh hostilities. At break of day he was happily joined by the two thousand Chinantlan auxiliaries, whom he had before expected; a reinforcement which rendered him perfectly secure against the consequences of a revolt, as it not only

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 10.

augmented his strength, but shewed Narvaez, that he was beloved, befriended, and respected in the country.

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Now it was that the enemy beheld their disgrace in full view. Night had concealed from them the number of their adversaries, and the bad condition of their arms : morning revealed all : they cursed the confidence of Narvaez ; and their indignities at his supineness made way for their esteem of the vigilance, prudence, and undaunted courage of Cortez. All were charmed with the generosity of the conqueror, the clemency shewn to the prisoners in general, and the humanity and tenderness to the sick and wounded. The friends of Cortez among the troops of his rival now laid aside dissimulation, entered freely into his service, and were followed by those who were less affected to his interest. They were all admitted into the presence of their new general ; and many would have fallen at his feet, had he not prevented them by his embraces. Every man gave in his name, disputing for a preference on the roll ; nor was there one who so much as intimated an inclination of returning to Cuba. When Cortez had sufficiently examined their dispositions, he ordered their arms to be returned, and by this mark of confidence entirely won their affections. The officers most attached to Narvaez were sent with their general prisoners to Villa Rica, where a proper garrison was established *. Thus in the course of a few hours was Cortez delivered, by his own valour and sagacity, from a danger that seemed to threaten him with inevitable ruin ; the last effort of his mortal enemy Valasquez was defeated ; and he found himself not only possessed of a fleet of eighteen sail, but at the head of an army of upwards of one thousand Spaniards, ready to co-operate with him in the accomplishment of his high designs.

But the combination of fortunate circumstances which attended this victory, did not so elevate Cortez as to render him unmindful of Alvarado, and the forces left behind in Mexico. He was sensible of the danger to which such an handful of men was exposed, in the heart of a vast empire filled with discontent and sedition. Their chief security depended on Montezuma's keeping his promise of not shifting his quarters, or attempting any innovation during the absence of Cortez ; an obligation of no great force where interest, inclination, and policy, united to oppose it. Besides, Montezuma, however well affected to the Spaniards, might not have it in his power to repress the zeal of his subjects, and prevent them from embracing this opportunity of showering down vengeance on the heads of those who held their sovereign in a disgraceful, though a kind of voluntary bondage.

Full of these thoughts, Cortez determined to direct his march back to Mexico without loss of time ; and that no damage might happen to the fleet at Villa Rica, he ordered the ships to be unrigged, and all their sails and cordage to be lodged in the fort. He intended to divide his forces, in order to avoid giving umbrage to Montezuma, by entering his capital with so large an army ; but a letter which he received from Alvarado altered his determination, and made him resolve to

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 1, 2. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 10.

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march with all his troops to the relief of that gallant officer. The advices were that the Mexicans had taken arms, and in despite of Montezuma, who had sacredly observed his word, made such frequent attacks upon the Spanish quarters, and with such multitudes, that all the Spaniards must necessarily sink under the number of their enemies, unless speedily succoured. The letter was brought by a Spanish soldier, accompanied with an embassy from Montezuma, representing to Cortez, That it was entirely out of his power to repress the fury of his subjects; that he would never abandon Alvarado and the Spaniards, or forfeit his word, but if relief did not arrive soon, that he could not promise for the consequences *.

After this intelligence, there was no room either for deliberation or delay: officers and soldiers unanimously declared that their immediate march was indispensable, and their union necessary; and Montezuma's embassy furnished Cortez with a handsome pretext for leading to the capital what might be deemed a formidable army, a thousand Spanish foot, and near one hundred cavalry. For the greater conveniency of provisions, Cortez divided his army into small bodies, who had orders to take different routes, and to meet at Tlascala, the general rendezvous. The troops, however, notwithstanding this precaution, suffered great hardships from hunger and thirst, as well as fatigue, all which they bore with incredible patience: even the soldiers who came with Narvaez, emulous of equalling the veterans, endured their sufferings without murmuring, as they regarded Mexico as the land of promise, where they would be sufficiently rewarded.

The entry of Cortez into Tlascala was splendid, and his reception hospitable. Magiscatzin lodged him in his own house, and the senate gave orders for the whole army of the republic to be in readiness to attend him to Mexico; but he would only accept of two thousand chosen men, that his army might not appear so formidable as to alarm Montezuma. On entering the Mexican dominions he found, that disaffection to the Spaniards was not confined to the capital. The principal inhabitants had deserted the towns through which he passed; no provision was made for the subsistence of his troops; and though he was permitted to advance towards Mexico without opposition, and even to pass the lake, there were several suspicious appearances which rendered circumspection necessary. The two Spanish brigantines were found staved and half burnt; the suburbs, and forts at the entrance of the city were abandoned; the bridges serving for a communication between the streets were broken down; and all was wrapt in profound and alarming silence. The painful anxiety inspired by these unfavourable signs continued, till the Spaniards in Mexico discovering the army at a distance, raised a loud shout, and dispelled the gloom of apprehension. Alvarado and his people ran to the gate of their quarters, and received their companions with inexpressible transports of joy; and Montezuma, with all his attendants, came to the outermost court to congratulate the general on his arrival †.

* De S. His, lib. iv. c. 11.

† Id. *ibid.*

Cortez is said to have been so much elated with success, that he not only forgot, on this occasion, that respect which he was accustomed to pay to Montezuma, but to have embittered the insult by expressions full of contempt for that unfortunate prince and his people *. But however this may have been, authors being by no means agreed on the point, his first care certainly was to enquire into the origin of the insurrection, that the knowledge of the cause might lead him to a proper judgement of the effects, and enable him to contrive a remedy for the evil. Here again the most respectable authors are divided; some ascribing the hostilities of the Mexicans solely to the avarice and cruelty of the Spaniards, and others considering the violence on both sides, as resulting entirely from the turbulent ambition of the Mexican nobles. But in this, as in most other cases, truth seems to lie in a medium between the two extremes.

On the departure of Cortez for Zempoalla, the Mexican nobility flattered themselves that the long expected opportunity of restoring their sovereign to liberty, and of vindicating their country from the dominion of strangers, was at length arrived; that while the forces of their oppressors were divided, and the arms of one party turned against the other, they might triumph with greater facility over both †. With this view, consultations were held and schemes concerted. Of these machinations Alvarado had intelligence: he was informed by his spies, that a dangerous conspiracy was forming against the Spaniards; nor was it long before some of the conspirators themselves betrayed to him the whole secret. Alvarado, who wanted that extent of capacity which had enabled Cortez to dissipate all the designs of his enemies, without affording them an occasion of knowing their own strength or his weakness, took no measures either for disconcerting the plans or soothing the spirits of the Mexicans: he waited only for an opportunity of vengeance; and such an opportunity offered itself.

A solemn festival was drawing near, which the Mexicans were annually wont to celebrate in the court of the great temple, with those public dances called *xitotes*, consisting of a promiscuous multitude of nobility and plebeians, who on such occasions mingled without distinction. This day was pitched upon by the nobles for putting their design in execution. Their intention was to begin the dance, in order to get the common people together, and then in a body, followed by the multitude, to proclaim aloud their sovereign's liberty, and the defence of their gods. The morning before the appointed day some of the chief conspirators came to visit Alvarado, and asked his permission to celebrate their festival; a formal compliment by which they hoped to prevent him from taking umbrage at their assembling in such numbers, or being led by jealousy to suspect their purpose. As his suspicions were not yet fully confirmed, or because he meant to be before hand with them in violence, he granted their request, on condition that they should not go armed, nor offer any human sacrifices. But he was informed that very night, that arms were secretly distributing in all the houses adjoining to the temple: his

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 2.

† Robertson, Hist. America, book v.
doubts

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doubts vanished; and he formed a rash and barbarous resolution, for which no apology, either moral or political, can be framed.

Alvarado determined to attack the Mexican nobility in the beginning of the festival, before they should have time to take arms, or assemble the populace. Nor did he find it any difficult matter to put his bloody design in execution. He went out accompanied by fifty of his men, as if prompted by curiosity to see the spectacle; and while the Mexicans were in the height of their jollity, the Spaniards fell upon the unarmed throng, and massacred a great number, none escaping except such as made their way over the wall that surrounded the temple, the avenues being secured. The soldiers set immediately about stripping the killed and wounded of the rich ornaments which they wore in honour of their gods, and which were none of the least motives to that act of barbarity; and Alvarado, after indulging them in this licence, returned to the Spanish quarters in a kind of triumph, without once acquainting the populace with his reasons, either real or pretended, for an assault so deliberately cruel*.

Enraged at the slaughter of their nobility, and the loss of their jewels, the Mexicans flew to arms, in order to revenge an action at best atrocious, but which appeared still more so to those, who, unacquainted with the conspiracy, considered it as flowing merely from an avaricious thirst of gold. Their dread of the Spanish weapons, and their inbred respect for Montezuma vanished in a moment: they reproached themselves for their late ignominious patience, and listened only to their fury. Should they wait until, under various pretences, they were all butchered?—Their sovereign, either forgetful of his office and dignity, or unable to exert it, could protect them no longer. Gods and men allowed them to defend themselves, and arms were in their hands. The flame of patriotism was not confined to the capital, but spread itself rapidly over the whole empire, the people every where vowing the destruction of the Spaniards. Alvarado, in this extremity, shewed himself as brave, as he had been imprudent in giving cause for it. He doubled his guard on the emperor; obliged him to exert the remains of his authority in his favour; and fortifying his quarters in the best manner possible in such circumstances, he stood out the storm, repelling the Mexicans in many attacks. Their fury, however, far from abating at the frequent and bloody repulses which they had suffered, seemed only to increase with their losses. They killed several of the Spaniards; wounded more; reduced to ashes their magazine of provisions; and, in order to cut off their retreat, destroyed, as already observed, the two brigantines which Cortez had built to command the lake†.

Strong as the antipathy of the Mexicans was against the Spaniards, they not only neglected to break down the bridges on the causeways, but permitted

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 12. Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 2. In order to contradict the assertion of las Casas, who asserts that this massacre was committed merely from motives of avarice, Herrera tells us, that the Mexicans had actually hid arms in the neighbouring houses, for the destruction of the Spaniards, "as was affirmed by several women, who always discovered the truth." Ut supra.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 2.

Cortez, in the manner related, to enter the capital a second time without opposition. This neglect has been ascribed by some writers to their want of military foresight; but the destruction of the brigantines shews they were by no means destitute of that; and as the former measure was soon after adopted, we cannot suppose it to have been beyond the reach of their capacity. Nor did they let this apparent advantage slip, as suggested by other writers, from their eagerness in pushing on the siege of the Spanish quarters; for they were no sooner informed of the approach of Cortez, than they suspended all hostilities, and this two or three days before his arrival*. They could not be ignorant how much his army was increased, yet they left him a free entrance. In this mysterious conduct there must, therefore, have been some design: the Mexicans, in a word, having tried their strength with the Spaniards, appear to have been elated at finding their enemies not immortal, and confiding in their own numbers, to have deliberately admitted Cortez and his new army into the city, that they might afterwards break down the bridges, and exterminate them to a man, either by famine or the sword†.

Cortez was fully persuaded that some such design was hatching: but he relied upon his own strength for crushing it, without having recourse, as formerly, to Montezuma's authority; and secretly perhaps he was not displeased, that Alvarado had furnished him with so good a pretext for beginning the violent conquest, and plundering of so rich a city. His behaviour to that officer, however, spoke a different language: he not only blamed Alvarado for neglecting to inform the people of the conspiracy, but for not consulting Montezuma before he took any step in regard to it, as both must now consider the slaughter of the Mexican nobility as an act of wanton cruelty and avarice; and he resolved to take the first opportunity, if we may credit de Solis, to undeceive the populace, and weaken the faction of the nobles‡.

The Mexicans kept close all the evening on which Cortez arrived, nor was the quiet of the night disturbed. Morning came without any alarm; and the general observing that the same suspicious silence reigned as the day before, he dispatched Diego de Ordaz, with a party of four hundred Spaniards and Tlascalans, to scour the streets, and endeavour to penetrate into the cause of this mysterious stillness. Ordaz had not advanced a great way, when he discovered an armed party, sent out probably as a decoy to draw him into danger, and which had the effect. The party retreated, and he pursued, in hopes of taking some prisoners from whom he might extort intelligence: but before he was able to effect his purpose, he found himself inclosed between two vast armies, both which attacked him at the same time; while in the windows and galleries of the houses appeared a third body of enemies, who poured down such showers of stones, arrows, and darts as obscured the sky, and quite covered the Spaniards. Ordaz, who on this occa-

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 12.

† This conjecture, founded on circumstances, is supported by a fact from Herrera, who informs us, that the Mexicans stood at their doors, "and seemed to threaten as the Spaniards passed."

‡ Hist. de las Conq. de Mexico, lib. iv. c. 12.

sion stood in need of all his valour and experience, formed a double front, in order to resist with swords and pikes the two torrents of enemies below, and plied those above with his fire-arms. This disposition was certainly the most judicious that could have been devised in his circumstances; but his chief advantage, without which all his firmness and address would have proved insufficient to extricate him from the pressing danger, arose from the impatient ardour of the Mexicans, who hastened on so tumultuously, as to obstruct each other by their numbers, and soon left nothing else to the Spaniards but to massacre without resistance. The fire-arms cleared the galleries, and the carnage below was so dreadful, that the Mexicans, at last, losing courage, retired to a distance, and used revilings and menaces instead of blows. Ordaz, who was only sent to make discoveries, did not think it advisable to pursue his victory; he therefore retreated to his quarters, in the same disposition as when he was closely charged by the enemy. After some difficulty he joined Cortez, having left eight men dead on the spot, himself with almost all his party being wounded*.

This daring proof of the resentment of the Mexicans made Cortez sensible, that any attempt to recover their confidence would now be ineffectual; that it could only serve to diminish his reputation, and encourage the enemy, by convincing them he stood in awe of their numbers. He therefore determined to oblige them, by some signal blow, to make the first advances towards an accommodation; for which purpose, he was preparing to fall forth with the greater part of his troops, in hopes that the vigour of such a collected effort would bring them to terms, when the enemy anticipated his design. After the retreat of Diego de Ordaz, which the Mexicans considered as no better than a flight, they halted at some distance from the Spanish quarters, and formed the bold resolution of attacking the palace on all sides. The adjacent streets were immediately filled with armed men; and when every thing was ready for the assault, the drums and shells gave the dreadful signal. The Mexican vanguard was composed of companies of archers, who were intended to clear the walls, in order to facilitate the approach of the centre and rear. They all advanced with precipitation and fury; and the discharge of arrows, being destined to cover the escalade, was so incredibly thick, that the Spaniards found the utmost difficulty in defending the ramparts. The artillery and small arms made dreadful havock among the enemy; yet such was the obstinate valour of the Mexicans, who came determined to conquer or die, that they intrepidly advanced to fill up the chasms left by the fallen, trampling, without fear or dismay, on the bodies of the killed and wounded, until they themselves met the same fate, and were succeeded by other combatants, no less brave, and eager on vengeance.

Nothing was left untried by the Mexicans to gain possession of the ramparts. Several of them attempted to scale the fortifications at the very mouths of the Spanish cannon; others endeavoured to force open the gates, or break down the walls with ill-contrived instruments; many mounted upon the shoulders of their

* Id. *ibid.*

companions, that their weapons might do more execution ; and great numbers formed their spears into ladders, by which they attempted to gain the windows and terraces. They all exposed themselves, without reserve, to danger, and performed actions of the most impetuous valour and savage ferocity. At last night seasonably interposed, and obliged them to retreat before they were vanquished, out of a superstitious custom which prevailed, as already observed, among all the inhabitants of New Spain, of never fighting during the absence of the sun's influence.

But, on the present occasion, the superstition of the Mexicans was not able entirely to subdue their ardour. They continued during the night to shoot at a distance with fired arrows ; which setting the buildings of the palace in flames, obliged the Spaniards to break down some walls, to cut off the communication between the houses, and afterwards toil with indefatigable industry, in order to repair those breaches, which would serve as an inlet to that torrent of enemies which they expected to rush upon them as soon as day appeared. In this apprehension they were deceived ; for though the first beams of light had scarce declared the approach of morning when the Mexicans come in view, they kept at a distance, and endeavoured to provoke the Spaniards to quit their walls by the most injurious expressions. They ostentatiously dared them to battle, treating them as cowards for lurking behind their entrenchments ; and the general, who had before resolved upon a sally that day, laid hold of this provocation as an incentive to fire the minds of his people.

Conformable to this resolution, Cortez drew out the whole body of his troops, leaving only such a garrison as was necessary for the security of the quarters ; and after whetting their courage by a short speech, representing the necessity they were under of giving the enemy some signal proof of their prowess, he divided them into three battalions, each consisting of Spaniards and Tlascalans, and formed with a double front, in the manner so successfully employed by Diego de Ordaz. Two of these battalions he ordered to clear the cross streets, and the third, composed of his best troops, at the head of which he marched in person, took the street of Tacuba, where the greatest body of the enemy was posted. The three battalions engaged at once ; and the Mexicans both gave and received the charge with firmness, venturing to come to the push of spears with the Spaniards. The fire-arms, which were levelled at the galleries and windows, could not put a stop to the showers of stones incessantly poured down ; it was therefore necessary to set diverse houses on fire, in order to check an evil for which there was no other remedy.

After an obstinate engagement, in which multitudes were slain, the Mexicans at last gave way before the superior arms and discipline, rather than the valour of the Spaniards, and were pursued from street to street, into a great square, where they made their last effort, and were totally routed. The flight was confused and disorderly, the wounded being trampled to death by the flying ; and the slaughter would have been still more dreadful, had not Cortez put a stop to the pursuit, in hopes of inducing the enemy, by this act of moderation, to sue for terms.

Already

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Already the carnage was so great that the canals were tinged with blood, and the streets filled with heaps of dead bodies; but the loss on the side of the Mexicans could not be distinctly computed. Cortez had twelve soldiers killed, and a much greater number wounded; a cheap price for victory, had the action been decisive, or the conqueror in a better condition to support the loss of his men. The engagement lasted the whole morning, and the Spaniards were frequently hard pressed. In pursuing they were obliged to fill up ditches, and sustain at the same time the charge of the enemy, who returned in swarms on every new obstruction. The Tlascalans behaved with great gallantry, and fought with order and regularity: every individual, in a word, fully discharged his duty; and Cortez, in particular, displayed all the qualities of a soldier and commander, being no less active with his arm than vigilant with his eye*.

A suspension of hostilities, as if by mutual agreement, was the consequence of this trial of strength, both parties taking breath, in order to renew their efforts with fresh vigour. Meanwhile Cortez did not neglect the opportunity which this interval afforded him, of making overtures of peace, by means of some of Montezuma's attendants. He was induced to this measure by observing that the Mexicans, who crowded in from all parts of the empire, like the head of the Hydra, only multiplied by their losses, and seemed to gather new life under the stroke levelled for their destruction. His proposals, however, were rejected, to the great grief of Montezuma, who now began to be much alarmed, lest his tumultuous subjects should entirely throw off their allegiance, and lose all dread of his authority. Some of the persons appointed to conduct the negotiation returned sorely treated, and others remained with the enemy. Among these was Quilavaca, king of Iztacpalapa, Montezuma's brother, whom the malcontents chose for their leader†.

All hopes of accommodation now vanished, and Cortez made preparations both for resisting the prodigious number of his enemies, and for attacking them to advantage, by securing his own people from the showers of stones, darts, and arrows, discharged from the windows and galleries of the houses. With this view he ordered four wooden towers to be built. These towers, each of which was capable of containing thirty men, were so constructed as to move upon wheels, without much difficulty: they were covered with planks three inches thick, and furnished in the front and sides with openings, for the convenience of discharging under cover. Even the novelty of such machines, he expected, would strike terror into the enemy. When every thing was in readiness, the general made a second sally in person, at the head of the bulk of the Spaniards, and all the Tlascalans; taking with him some pieces of cannon, the wooden towers, and a few horse, to be used whenever they could act to advantage. All was in profound silence when the Spaniards left their quarters; but scarce had they passed through one street, when the alternate shouts of an innumerable multitude, intermixed with the hoarse and dismal sound of drums,

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 12. 13. Herrera dec. II. lib. viii. c. 2. † Herrera dec. II. lib. viii. c. 2.

shells, and other warlike instruments, made them sensible that they were not marching against an enemy unprepared, and filled them with disquieting apprehensions.

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The Mexicans did not stay till they were attacked: they came boldly up to the Spaniards; gave and received the first charge, without disorder or precipitation; and when they found it necessary to give ground, retired to some entrenchments, which they had cut in the streets. These they defended with so much valour and obstinacy, that they could only be dislodged by the artillery. They fought with more regularity than in any former engagement; directed their courage to better purpose, and seemed to have improved in the art of war by experience. Their conduct discovered nothing of the rashness of a popular tumult: they appeared to be under the command of judicious officers; every discharge was deliberate and well aimed; and all their posts were defended with intrepidity, and abandoned without confusion. Huge stones, and pieces of rocks, were tumbled down upon the wooden machines from the galleries, and broke them in pieces. When they became sensible of the damage sustained by the artillery and musketry, they retired gradually without turning their backs, maintaining a kind of running fight, till they came to the next entrenchment, where they again made an obstinate stand.

During the greater part of the day the battle raged; the Mexicans disputing every inch of ground with such well directed valour, as convinced Cortez of the impossibility of reducing them by force. The city received considerable damage, many houses being burnt down, and the enemy lost more men than in both the preceding engagements. But though repulsed, they were not defeated: on the contrary, they maintained a retreating fight, till night separated the combatants, and furnished Cortez with an opportunity of returning to his quarters without relinquishing the victory. He lost forty men, chiefly Tlascalans; fifty Spaniards were grievously wounded; and among these the general, who was shot in the left hand by an arrow, during the heat of the battle*. But his deepest wound was in his heart; which was stung with grief and indignation at being foiled by an enemy that he had held in contempt.

The more leisure Cortez had for reflection, the more keen his uneasiness grew. As soon as he arrived at his quarters, he delivered himself up to thought, and spent the greater part of the night in deep meditation; but meditation afforded him no relief: though anxious to keep possession of Mexico, his tortured imagination could suggest no means for maintaining himself there. A mixture of shame, pride, and the fire of his own ardent genius, impelled him to new efforts, in order to subdue the enemy: but when he reflected that, though constantly victorious, his very victories served only to accelerate his ruin; that, after all the multitudes slain, the number of the Mexicans seemed yet undiminished; that, instead of being humbled, their resentment and courage increased

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 13.

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with their losses ; and that they were daily improving in the art of war, a safe retreat appeared to be his only resource.

Nor was Montezuma less distracted and embarrassed by contending passions and combating reflections. He now began to apprehend, that his people had entirely thrown off their allegiance, on account of his attachment to the Spaniards ; and yet he perceived a reserve, on the side of Cortez, as if he suspected him of encouraging his subjects in their hostilities. From the highest tower of the palace he had beheld the last engagement, and could thence discover the kings of Tezeuco and Iztacpalapa, with several other princes of the first distinction in the empire, and who might aspire to the throne, animating the Mexicans, and directing the battle. Hitherto he had regarded the insurrection as a popular tumult ; but now he foresaw the ruin of his own authority, and perhaps a total revolution in the government. In the first transports of his rage, he devoted all the nobility to destruction, breathing nothing but slaughter, and feeding his heart with revenge and blood ; but when he reflected on his own inability, what he had been, what he was, and might likely be, the natural violence of his temper gave place to weakness, and he sunk into a state of the most humiliating dependency.

After recalling some degree of resolution, Montezuma deliberated on the different means for re-establishing his sinking authority ; and none appeared so well calculated for this purpose, as to dispatch the Spaniards, return to his own palace, and endeavour to conciliate the affections of his subjects by acts of clemency and generosity. Full of this idea, he sent for Cortez, and told him, That now the distracted state of his kingdom required some very effectual remedy ; that his imagination could devise none more likely to be attended with happy consequences, than that the Spaniards should evacuate Mexico, and thereby deprive the insurgents of all pretence for their violences. The clamours of his vassals, he said, sounded well in the ears of the vulgar, since all that they demanded was the liberty of their prince ; and things were now come to such a height, that no other prospect of appeasing the public discontents remained, but taking away the cause. He bitterly exclaimed against the insolence of the nobility, and repeated how much he had suffered by preserving his promise to Cortez, and continuing his attachment to the Spaniards ; and he concluded with touching upon the groundless jealousies entertained of his conduct, by those very persons on whose account he had forfeited the esteem and affections of his subjects.

Cortez, whose own sentiments entirely coincided with those of Montezuma, in regard to the propriety of quitting Mexico in the present posture of affairs, though from different motives, readily assented to the emperor's proposition ; and willing to put an act of necessity on the footing of obedience to the royal mandate, replied, That it was both his inclination and duty to pay an entire resignation to the will of his imperial majesty, without entering into the reasons of his determination, or losing time in representing the inconveniencies which might

might ensue from it. But it would give him great uneasiness, he said, to withdraw from his royal person, until he was fully assured of the obedience of his subjects; especially as the declaration of the nobility, in favour of the populace, required the utmost circumspection: yet as his departure was considered as a necessary step towards a happy reconciliation, he had determined immediately to march with his army to Zempoalla, only requesting of his majesty, that he would, before the departure of the Spaniards, oblige his vassals to lay down their arms; not that their obstinacy, he added, gave him any concern, as he carried on the point of his sword, and in the valour of his troops, all that was necessary to his own security, but that they might learn to respect once more their sovereign's authority, and not ascribe to their own rebellious proceedings what they owed to his goodness.

Montezuma was highly delighted with this ready compliance, which was equally unexpected and agreeable to his wishes. He returned his acknowledgments to Cortez with much warmth, and both his voice and countenance strongly spoke the satisfaction of his heart. He resolved to oblige the general in the article of ordering his people to lay down their arms, at the same time that he entertained some doubts whether they would obey his commands, and dreaded the thoughts of so mortifying a stroke to his royal dignity. In the midst of the conference advice was brought to Cortez, that the enemy were preparing to renew the assault, and that the garrison were under arms. He immediately took his leave; but before he could join his troops, the Mexicans had pushed them with such impetuosity, that they had gained the foot of the works, in despite of the utmost endeavours of the Spaniards, and the briskest fire from the artillery and musquetry. The Mexicans in the rear plied their bows and slings, in order to beat off the Spaniards from the ramparts, and make way for the vanguard to scale the works, and push the assault. In some places they had got footing within the fortifications, when Cortez came up with a body of reserve, and dislodged them with difficulty.

Montezuma thought this a seasonable opportunity of acquitting himself of the promise which he had made to Cortez. He accordingly called for his crown and royal robes, not forgetting the imperial mantle, and the jewels which he used to wear upon solemn occasions, and in all this pomp ascended the terrace fronting the great avenue to the palace; a herald having first notified with a loud voice to the Mexican army, That the great Montezuma had condescended to shew himself to his people, to hear their demands, and redress their grievances. At the name of their sovereign, whom they had been accustomed to honour and revere as a god, the tumult instantly subsided; every arm fell, the weapons dropping from the hands, and every tongue was silent: all were motionless and still, as if afraid to breathe in his presence. Montezuma approached with a look of severity mixed with lenity; and as soon as the Mexicans observed him, all bowed their heads, many bent the knee, and not a few prostrated themselves on the ground. He threw his eyes over the whole multitude; then fixing them upon some

some of the nobility, whom he called by their names, he commanded them to draw near, honouring them with the title of friends and kinsmen, and addressed them in a speech to the following purport.

“ I am so far, my vassals, from looking upon this expression of your zeal as a crime, that I feel myself inclined to excuse you. It was indeed a blameable excess of loyalty, to take up arms without my leave; but it was an excess of your fidelity, and therefore pardonable. You believed, and not without some appearance of reason, that I was detained by force and violence in this palace of my predecessors: and to relieve your sovereign from confinement is too great an enterprise to be attempted without some disorder, no law being sufficient to restrain grief and resentment within the bounds of moderation and prudence. The cause of your commotion is without foundation, as I remain, without any kind of violence, among those foreigners whom you treat as enemies; yet I am sensible your inclinations are good, though you are mistaken in your mode of proceeding. It is of my own free will that I have continued among the Spaniards; and I thought myself obliged to shew them this favour, on account of the respect they have always paid me, and out of regard to the prince who sends them. They are now dispatched: I have resolved that they shall depart my court; and they are preparing instantly to quit the country. But it is not reasonable that I should be sooner obeyed by them than by you, who are my natural subjects; nor that their courtesy should appear greater than your duty. Lay down your arms, and come to my presence as you ought, that all tumults and disturbance ceasing, you may be convinced how much you are in my favour, by the pardon I am ready to grant you *.”

After Montezuma had finished his speech the silence continued, no person being so bold as to make a reply. All were astonished to find their sovereign overflowing with kindness, at a time when they expected the chastisement of his indignation; and some wept to see the same prince who used to command with the most absolute authority, suing with the servility of the meanest of his slaves. But this universal stillness was succeeded by the most violent commotions: the storm seemed to have gathered force from its short remission. Fear was suddenly converted into fury, and profound respect into the most insolent contempt. Some called aloud, that Montezuma ought to resign the sceptre and diadem for the distaff and spindle; and their injurious language and opprobrious expressions were succeeded by loud shouts, and then by a general discharge of arrows. Two Spanish soldiers who stood near the emperor, endeavoured to protect him with their shields; but all their care could not prevent him from receiving several arrows, or the blow of a stone, which struck him on the temple, and laid him speechless on the ground.

No sooner did the Mexicans behold their sovereign fall, than their veneration returned: they were seized with remorse and horror, and fled, without knowing

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 14. Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. 2.

whither,

whicher, as if the divine vengeance had been pursuing them for the awful crime they had committed*.

Cortez, who was exceedingly troubled at the accident that had befallen the emperor, instantly ordered him to be carried to his apartment; and finding he had now no enemies to oppose, repaired in person to visit that unfortunate prince. But Montezuma, who soon after recovered his senses, not only refused all consolation, but perceiving how low he was sunk, the natural haughtiness of his spirit returned, and in a transport of rage, he tore the bandages from his wounds, venting his indignation in furious threats, which ended in sighs and lamentations. The wound in his head was at first considered as dangerous, and his inward agitations quickly made it mortal; nor was it possible to apply the necessary remedies, till he was become so weak that he had not force to resist. He obstinately rejected all nourishment, disdaining to protract an ignominious life. Cortez and father Olmedo perceiving his danger, interposed their endeavours, in order to induce him to embrace the Christian faith; but he would never condescend to listen to them so far as to return a direct answer: one while he exclaimed against the insult he had received; at another he breathed nothing but vengeance; anon he would fall into fits of despair, conjuring Cortez to revenge his injuries upon the traitors. In this conflict of mind he continued three days, and then expired, less the victim of the violence, than of the contempt of his subjects†.

C H A P. VI.

The Proceedings of Cortez and his Followers continued, from the Death of Montezuma to the Reduction of Mexico.

THE death of Montezuma was a severe blow to the ambition of Cortez. On the voluntary subjection of that prince he had founded the greater part of his designs. This prospect now vanished, and he found himself under the necessity of forming an entire new plan of operations. He saw the necessity of quitting Mexico, and waiting the arrival of supplies from Spain, before he could attempt the reduction of that city: but it was dangerous to retreat in the face of an enraged and exulting enemy; and therefore necessary, in the first place, to endeavour to intimidate or appease the Mexicans. With this view, he called together all the servants of the deceased monarch, from among whom he chose six persons, of the greatest eminence, to carry the royal corpse into the city. Among these were several priests, who had been taken prisoners, and who were eye-witnesses to the emperor's wound and death. He instructed them to acquaint, in his name, the princes who were at the head of the mutinous po-

* Id. *ibid.*

† Herrera, *dec.* II. lib. viii. c. 2. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 14, 15.

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pulace, That he had sent them the body of their late sovereign, murdered by their sacrilegious hands, which enormous crime gave fresh right to the justice of his resentment ; that Montezuma, before his death, had frequently conjured him (as those deputies well knew) to revenge his wrongs, and to chastise them for their impious rebellion ; but as he regarded the insurrection as the effects of popular fury, which they had not been able to restrain, he once more offered peace, that the innocent might not be involved in the punishment of the guilty : that he was ready to agree to any reasonable terms ; but if they rejected his proposal, and delayed to repent of their atrocious guilt, that they should not only be treated as enemies, but as rebels and traitors to their prince, and must expect to feel the utmost rigour of his arms : he would lay waste, and utterly destroy their city ; and they would be made sensible, when too late, of the difference between hostilities little more than defensive, and a declared war for the purpose of chastisement and vengeance.

The six Mexicans immediately departed with this message, bearing the royal corpse upon their shoulders. At a little distance from the quarters, a body of the citizens advanced to meet them, with signs of reverence and respect ; and no sooner did they observe the reliques of their sovereign, than, seized anew with horror, they threw down their arms, abandoned their posts, and began a lamentable yell, which soon diffused itself over the whole city, and made it one scene of weeping and howling. These expressions of sorrow continued the whole night ; and in the morning, the body of the deceased monarch was carried with great solemnity to the mountain of Chapultepeque, where the Mexicans were accustomed to perform the obsequies, and preserve the ashes of their kings*.

During the three days that Montezuma languished after his wound, the Mexicans attempted nothing of any consequence. This remission of hostilities was partly occasioned by the remorse of the people at the crime they had committed, and partly by their want of leaders, all the nobility being employed in the election of a new emperor. The prince whom they raised to the throne was Quetzilavaca, king of Iztacpalapa, Montezuma's brother, a declared and inveterate enemy to the Spaniards. The effects of his councils soon appeared. No answer was returned to the proposals of Cortez ; and the day after the funeral of Montezuma, the war was renewed with fresh vigour, and more conduct. The streets were not only filled with armed men, denouncing vengeance, but a tower of the great temple, which overlooked the Spanish quarters, was garrisoned with a body of five hundred chosen warriors, who thence annoyed the Spaniards with their slings and arrows.

Cortez could have wished to retreat in peace, but that was now impracticable ; and from this post it was necessary to dislodge the enemy at any risk. In order to accomplish his design with more safety, he drew out the greater part of his army, and divided them into such squadrons as were requisite to defend the avenues of the temple, and prevent the Mexican garrison from receiving rein-

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 15.

forcements. This being effected, Escobar, to whom the attack upon the temple itself was committed, began the assault with great fury, and maintained it with obstinacy at the head of about two hundred chosen soldiers; but he was thrice repulsed by the Mexicans, who tumbled down large stones and beams from the top of the temple, upon the heads of the Spaniards, at the same time that they covered them with showers of darts and arrows. Escobar was retreating in confusion, when Cortez, who with a troop of horse was repelling the Mexicans in the streets, sensible that not only his reputation, but the safety of his army depended on the success of this assault, instantly dismounted; and ordering a shield to be tied to his wounded arm, rushed sword in hand amid the thickest of the enemy. Animated by the example of their general, the Spaniards returned to the charge with such ardour, that they forced their way up the stairs in the first attack, and soon after gained the rails that surrounded the platform at the top of the tower. There the struggle was renewed, and a dreadful carnage followed. The Mexican warriors, who were all men of rank, suffered themselves to be massacred rather than yield up their arms, and the priests and attendants on the temple furiously mingled with them, encouraging them to the defence of their gods. Some threw themselves violently over the battlements; others bravely met their fate, by rushing upon the points of the Spanish spears; and two noble youths, who had long defended themselves with vigour, conceived a design worthy of two Romans. In sacrificing their own lives, they resolved to rid their country of the author of all its calamities. For this purpose they laid down their arms, bent their knees, and approached Cortez in the posture of supplicants; then instantly seized him, hurried him towards the battlements, and by a noble act of patriotism, endeavoured to blend his ruin with their own. But Cortez was so fortunate as to disengage himself, by his strength and agility, while they precipitated themselves headlong, and were dashed in pieces*.

As soon as Cortez became master of the temple, he ordered it to be set on fire, and the provisions, which the Mexicans had laid up in great store, to be transported to his quarters. The management of this business he committed to the Tlascalans, who instantly put it in execution, while he with his cavalry, and the party under Escobar, hastened to the street of Tacuba, where he perceived the rest of the Spaniards were hotly engaged. The cavalry pressed forward, and broke through the multitude; killing, wounding, and trampling the enemy under foot. Escobar's infantry finished the defeat of such as had avoided the shock of the horse. But Cortez, in the heat of the action, having engaged himself too far, found it impracticable to make his way back to his troops, being surrounded and borne away by the flying enemy; he therefore directed his course into another street, and fortunately relieved his friend Duero, whom the Mexicans had made prisoner. They returned together to the Spanish army, after encountering the most incredible dangers. The victory was now complete; but as it was impossible to pursue it without leaving the quarters exposed, Cortez ordered

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 16.

a retreat to be founded, hoping that the enemy were at least sufficiently humbled, to permit him to quit the city without farther molestation.

The day after this engagement, the Mexicans demanded a parley, to which Cortez readily consented, not without hopes of coming, at least, to some reasonable terms of accommodation. He went to the battlements to hear their overtures; when some of their nobles drawing near proposed a cessation of arms in the name of the new emperor, on condition that Cortez, and all his people, should immediately prepare to quit the imperial dominions, and direct their march to the sea side, where their great canoes were waiting for them; adding, That if he did not instantly come to that resolution, he and all that were with him must inevitably perish, as they were now convinced by experience that the Spaniards were not immortal, and were obstinately determined to effect their destruction, though the death of every Spaniard should cost them the lives of thousands, after which there would still remain a sufficient number to celebrate the victory. This proposal was perfectly agreeable to Cortez, who wished nothing so much, in his present circumstances, as a peaceable departure out of Mexico; but willing to make it appear that he was not to be intimidated into concessions, he replied, That he was so well acquainted with the superior valour of his troops, though not immortal, as left him no doubt of being able to destroy the capital, and to subject the whole Mexican empire with his present force: yet moved at the calamities which the people had already suffered, through their own obstinacy, he was determined to depart, the object of his embassy being fully answered, and all cause of delay terminated with the life of Montezuma, whose friendship and liberality had detained him beyond expectation; and that he would execute his design as soon as the preliminary articles were settled, and the proper dispositions made for his march, and the accommodation of his army on the road*.

The Mexican deputies departed seemingly satisfied with this answer, and Cortez was sincerely so at the prospect of a safe retreat. But it was soon perceived, that nothing was more distant from the thoughts of the Mexicans than peace. The new emperor had called a council of his ministers and grandees, in order to deliberate on the measures necessary to be pursued in regard to the war with the Spaniards; and after several conferences, it was resolved, That the lamentable slaughter of their people by the Spanish weapons, made it necessary to change their whole system of hostility, and instead of incessant attacks, to block up Cortez and his troops in their quarters, and endeavour to reduce them by famine. In consequence of this resolution the overtures of peace were set on foot, in order to gain a suspension of arms; and the centinels discovered, in a few days, that the palace was blockaded at a distance; that the Mexicans were diligently employed in casting up trenches and other works to defend the passage of the canals; and that they had detached some bodies of men to the lake, in order to break down the bridges of the principal causeway, and cut off all communication with the road that leads to Tlascala†.

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 17.

† De Solis, lib. iv. c. 18.

This intelligence gave Cortez much concern. The necessity and danger of a retreat were now become equally obvious: the only point therefore to be determined was, how it could be accomplished with the least inconveniency. For this purpose a council of war was assembled. The first and grand point debated was, Whether they should march out openly in the face of day, when they could discern every danger, and see how to regulate their own motions, as well as how to resist the assaults of the enemy; or whether they should endeavour to retire secretly, by night. The latter opinion was preferred partly from a hope that the national superstition of the Mexicans would keep them quiet in the night, and partly from a fond belief in the predictions of one Botello, a private soldier, who passed for an astrologer among the troops, and who confidently assured the general of success, if he made his retreat during the season of darkness, but that not a man would be saved, if he marched out by day*: and it was farther resolved to retreat that very night, before the enemy, whose labours only ceased with the setting-sun, should have leisure to complete the works intended to obstruct their passage†.

Cortez, whose mind was as provident as his heart was intrepid, had ordered a bridge of beams and planks to be made, which was now finished, and might be carried on the shoulders of forty men. It was intended to be laid over the breaches in the causeway, to be carried from one opening to another, and was so constructed as to be capable of supporting the weight of all the horse and artillery. In order to conceal his design, Cortez thought it necessary to keep up the appearance of renewing the negotiation. With this view he had sent into the city one of the chief priests, who was his prisoner, and he now dispatched another Mexican of rank, to demand an answer to his last proposals, with power of making certain alterations if required. The intermediate time he employed in disposing every thing for his march. Instructions were given to the officers, and great circumspection used to provide against all contingencies. The van-guard was composed of two hundred Spanish foot, supported by a choice body of Tlascalans, and twenty horse, under the conduct of Sandoval, and other officers of reputation. The rear-guard, also consisting of a just mixture of horse and foot, and a greater number of both, was entrusted to Alvarado and Juan Velasquez de Leon. In the centre were placed the prisoners, (among whom were three sons of Montezuma, together with several Mexican nobles) the artillery, the baggage, and the rest of the army, except a choice body of one hundred men, under the command of the general, intended to be employed as necessity should require‡.

These dispositions being made, Cortez addressed the army in an eloquent speech; setting before them, in the strongest light, the difficulties and dangers which they must expect to encounter, lest they should sink into security by supposing that the Mexicans would not engage by night. He next ordered all the

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 3.

† De Solis, lib. iv. c. 17.

‡ Herrera,

dec. II. lib. viii. c. 3. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 18.

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gold and jewels to be brought into his apartment, and after separating a fifth for the king, out of those things which were most valuable, and least bulky, he determined to leave the remainder, valued at upwards of seven hundred thousand pesos, a prey to the enemy; saying, That it would be a shame to employ those hands in the gratification of avarice, which ought to be left free for the defence of life and reputation: but finding the soldiers dissatisfied at the thoughts of abandoning so much wealth, he added, That they were not to consider it as lost, as his intention was speedily to renew the enterprise, in such manner as would infallibly secure success, and redeem the treasure with double interest. He gave them however to understand, that he would not be offended at their carrying off as much gold as they conveniently could, provided they did not incommode themselves; a permission which was attended with the most fatal consequences, many loading themselves in such a manner as to be altogether unfit for service*.

About midnight the Spaniards left their quarters, and marched, in the order already mentioned, observing profound silence, along the causeway that led to Tacuba; because it was shorter than any of the rest, had fewer bridges, and lying most remote from the road towards Tlascala and the sea-coast, had been left more entire by the enemy. They reached the first breach in it without molestation, and hoped that their retreat was undiscovered: but the Mexicans, unperceived, had not only watched all their motions with attention, but had made proper dispositions for a most formidable attack. Favoured by the darkness of the night, they had filled with armed men, and drawn together an incredible number of canoes, which covered the whole length of the lake on both sides of the causeway; and while the Spaniards were employed in placing their bridge in the breach, and in conducting their horses and artillery along it, they were suddenly alarmed with the tremendous sound of warlike instruments, and a general shout from the innumerable multitude of their enemies. The Mexicans rushed forward to the charge with fearless impetuosity, as if they hoped in that moment to be avenged for all their wrongs; and the Spaniards felt the sharpness of their arrows, almost at the same time that they heard the noise of their enemies.

Unfortunately, in this moment of danger, the courage of Cortéz and his army was put to a new trial: the wooden bridge, by the weight of the horses and artillery, was wedged so fast in the stones and mud, that it was found impossible to remove it. Dismayed at this accident, the Spaniards advanced with precipitation towards the second breach; and in despite of their valour, discipline, and the superiority of their arms, (from which, by reason of their confined situation, and the obscurity of the night, they derived little advantage) they must have fallen a sacrifice to the resentment of their enemies, had the Mexicans continued the engagement with the same regularity and order observed in the first attack. But these yielding to their natural fury and impetuosity, they

* De Solis, ut supra.

pressed on tumultuously : the canoes crowded upon each other, and were dashed in pieces against the causeway ; and little more remained for the Spaniards than to massacre the naked and disorderly multitude. Even this exhausted their strength and spirits ; they were fatigued with the incessant exercise of their swords and spears, when a fresh attack, in front, required a farther exertion of their valour. Numbers of the Mexicans, whose canoes could not get forward to engage, impatient of the delay, had thrown themselves into the water, and scrambling up the causeway, where the Spaniards were to pass, formed themselves in tolerable order, and obliged Cortez to present a double front, and renew the engagement. Actuated by despair, and animated by the example of their general, the Spaniards now fought with such fearless intrepidity, that the Mexicans, in front, unable to sustain the shock, instantly gave way, and were pursued with incredible slaughter to the second breach, where thousands threw themselves into the water, and were trampled to death by the cavalry. The carnage was so great, that the chasm in the causeway was filled up with dead bodies, over which, by the assistance of a beam left entire by the enemy, Cortez and part of his army passed, and prosecuted their march to the last breach, without meeting with any farther obstruction. Fortunately the Mexicans had neglected to occupy this pass ; and the water being shallower, by reason of the vicinity of the shore, the Spaniards were able to wade to the other side.

Cortez formed his troops, as soon as he reached the main land, and immediately returned, accompanied by Sandoval, Olid, Davila, and other officers, together with a party of horse, and such foot soldiers as were yet capable of service, in order to assist the remainder of the army in their retreat, and encourage them by his presence and example to persevere in the efforts necessary to effect it. He was met by a party of his soldiers, who had broke through the enemy ; but he found many more overwhelmed by the multitude of the assailants, who pressed on with irresistible violence. All Mexico was now in arms ; and as fresh warriors instantly supplied the place of such as fell, the Spaniards were unable to sustain the weight of the torrent that poured in upon them, from every side. Nothing but confusion, terror, and dismay reigned in that part of the army which was next the city. Horse and foot, officers and soldiers, friends and enemies, were mingled together, and many fell without knowing from what hand the blow came.

The general returned as far as the second breach, at which the conflict was terrible. In vain did Alvarado endeavour to animate his men by the most warm exhortations, and the most heroic acts of valour : they were unable to repel the enemy, or to retreat without confusion ; the number of the Mexicans increasing, as did their fury, shouts, and rage. Nothing was to be heard, amid the darkness of the night, but the Spaniards crying, " Here ! here ! help ! help !"—or breathing their last in petitions to heaven ; while the Mexicans roared, " Kill ! kill !"—All was disorder and dread ; exultation on one side, and death, anguish, and groans on the other. In this extremity, Cortez charged
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with five horse the thickest of the enemy, and opened a path for his troops; while Alvarado, who was on the opposite side of the breach, and in the most imminent danger, saved his life by an astonishing feat of agility. Poising himself on the shaft of his spear, he entirely cleared the pass, which to this day is distinguished by the name of *Alvarado's Leap*. Many endeavoured to follow his example, but not one reached the other side; the greater part of the rear-guard being either drowned, killed, or taken prisoners*.

Cortez halted in the neighbourhood of Tacuba, in order to afford time for those who could escape from the battle, to join the army. Nor was this precaution unnecessary, as several Spaniards and Tlascalans were by that means saved. But still the loss was so great, that when morning appeared, and discovered to the general the shattered remains of his forces, now reduced to less than half their number; the survivors dejected, and most of them covered with wounds; the thoughts of what he had suffered, and the remembrance of so many faithful friends and gallant followers, who had fallen in that night of sorrow, filled his soul with such anguish, that while mustering his troops, and endeavouring to comfort them under their misfortunes, the tears were observed trickling from his eyes † — and his soldiers remarked with particular satisfaction, that while attentive to the duties of a commander, he was not insensible to the feelings of a man ‡. Among the officers of distinction, who perished in this fatal retreat, was Juan Velazquez de Leon, who had forsaken the party of his kinsman, the governor of Cuba, to follow the fortune of Cortez, and who was on that account as well as for his military merit, considered as the second person in the army. All the artillery, ammunition, and baggage were lost; the greater part of the horses, and above two thousand Tlascalans, were killed, and only a very small portion of the treasure was saved ||. Many of the soldiers, in consequence of the imprudent permission of Cortez, had so overloaded themselves with bars of gold, as not only to be unfit for action, but incapable of flying, and ignominiously fell the victims of their own avarice.

But amid all these disasters, it was no small consolation to Cortez and the whole army to find that Marina and Aguilar, whose office as interpreters was of so much importance, had made their escape. Nor was it less fortunate that the Mexicans gave over the pursuit, and allowed the Spaniards time to breathe after their fatigue. This pause proceeded from an accident which was not understood at the time. The sons of Montezuma, together with all the Mexican prisoners, had perished in the undistinguished slaughter; and in the morning when the enemy, allured by the spoils of the dead, beheld pierced with their own arrows, the

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 3. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 18.
lib. iv. c. 19.

† Robertson, Hist. America, book v.

‡ De Solis,

|| Herrera,

dec. II. lib. viii. c. 3. The Spanish historians differ remarkably with respect to the loss of their countrymen on this occasion. Cortez himself states the number at 150, De Solis at 200, Herrera at 280, Gomara at 450, and Castillo at 870. Gomara, from the subsequent musters, appears to be nearest the truth. Dr. Robertson, who has taken much pains on this subject, computes the loss of the Spaniards at full 600.

bodies of those unhappy princes, they stood amazed and confounded at the shocking spectacle. Those who first saw it drew back, that others might approach, and all contemplated with silent horror, the children of their sovereign murdered by the same hands that had wrought the death of the father. When the melancholy news spread among the troops, they were seized with fear and remorse, not doubting but the indignation of the gods would follow this repetition of their sacrilege. A panic struck them, and vengeance was suspended. Their resentment against the Spaniards was absorbed in sorrow for their own guilt, and pity for the timeless fate of the innocent princes. An account of this mournful event was sent by the Mexican chiefs to the new emperor; and he, under the necessity of affecting a share in the general despondency, ordered the army to halt, till the priests, followed by a numerous train from the city, came to receive the royal corpses, in order to convey them to the burial place of their ancestors*.

Meanwhile Cortez, having rested and formed his troops, proceeded on his march with all possible speed. But before the army had gained any place of shelter, he observed the whole multitude of the Mexicans advancing upon his rear with rapidity, while he was harassed on every side by the inhabitants of the adjacent country. Exhausted with fatigue, and dejected by misfortunes, the Spaniards were ready to sink under their calamities, when Cortez observed a tower upon an eminence, of which he resolved to possess himself, as a defensible post. But the execution of this design was attended with almost insuperable difficulties: he was obliged to keep a front to the enemy, and continue fighting while he ascended the hill. At length, however, he arrived at the tower, took possession of it without resistance, and found in it not only all the shelter for which he wished, but some provisions to refresh his men. The enemy did not intermit their attacks through the remainder of the day, but were with little trouble prevented from making any impression; and when evening began to approach, they all retired, and pursued the road towards Mexico.

After providing against the possibility of a surprise, and ordering the guards and centinels to be sooner relieved than usual, that all might have their share of rest, Cortez assembled his officers to deliberate concerning the route which they should hold in their retreat. They were now on the west side of the lake: Tlascala, the only place where they could hope for a friendly reception, lay about sixty-four miles to the east of Mexico; so that they were obliged to go round the north end of the lake, before they could fall into the road which led thither. A Tlascalan soldier undertook to be their guide; and it was unanimously resolved, that they should march the space of two or three leagues that very night, in order to gain ground of the enemy, in case they should be disposed to continue the pursuit. They accordingly began to move about midnight, and prosecuted their march till morning, amid perpetual alarms from the neighbouring peasants, whom they mistook for the advanced parties of the Mexican army. The dawn

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 19.

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dispelled their apprehensions; and in a short time, they discovered a village, advantageously situated, and as they had reason to think, well peopled. Of this place Cortez determined to take possession at all hazards; but force was unnecessary: the village was entirely abandoned by the inhabitants; and the Spaniards found in it, what was no less welcome than so seasonable a resting-place, or less necessary for recruiting their exhausted strength, a considerable quantity of provisions. Here the army continued two days, being unable sooner to proceed on account of the distressed condition of the wounded. They made two marches more through a rough, barren, and rocky country; always keeping at a distance from the great road, and persevering in their journey under the united calamities of fatigue, thirst, and hunger, feeding upon herbs, roots, and the flesh of one of the horses that died; without any covering under which to pass the night, and continually persecuted by flying bodies of the enemy*.

The last of these two laborious and distressing marches, which the Spaniards were encouraged to accomplish by the unshaken fortitude, and cheering example of their general, terminated at a little village, where the army was received with a suspicious civility. The inhabitants not only gave up freely all their own provisions, but procured large quantities from the neighbouring hamlets; insomuch that the half-famished soldiers began to forget all their past sufferings in the present enjoyment, without once reflecting on the danger of such security. This was a stratagem of the Mexicans, in order to lull the vigilance of Cortez; but they wanted policy to complete the deceit, betraying their design by their own eagerness and simplicity.

Early next morning the Spanish army, recruited by rest and sustenance, began to ascend the mountain which, on the other side, declines into the valley of Otumba, through which they must necessarily pass, in order to take the road that leads to Tlascala. They were still pursued by flying parties of the enemy, whose shouts and scoffs now expressed rather a joyful satisfaction than indignation; and Marina remarked that they frequently exclaimed, in an exulting tone, "Go on, ruffians! go to the place where you shall quickly meet the vengeance due to your crimes." This threat, though sufficient to rouse the attention of Cortez, the Spaniards did not fully comprehend till they reached the summit of the mountain, whence they discovered a vast army, whose front occupied the whole breadth of the spacious valley, and whose depth the eye could not reach. It was the last effort of the Mexican power for the destruction of the Spaniards. The new sovereign had collected the whole force of the empire; and while one body was dispatched to assail the Spaniards in their retreat, the principal army had been assembled on the other side of the lake, in order to obstruct Cortez in his march, and was posted with admirable judgment in this extensive plain, where the Mexicans could at once act to advantage, lie undiscovered by their enemies, and be certain of meeting them, if any made their escape. The Mexican army was composed of various nations, as

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 20.

appeared by the diversity of the ensigns which streamed in the air. In the centre of the multitude was distinguished the captain-general of the empire, borne upon men's shoulders, in a litter most sumptuously adorned, and elevated in such a manner, that, being conspicuous to all, and a witness of every one's behaviour, his orders might be issued with judgment, and punctually obeyed. On this litter, or chair of state, stood erected the royal standard of Mexico, which could only be entrusted to the hands of the commander in chief, and was never brought into the field except in cases of the last importance. This standard consisted of a net of massy gold, hanging on a staff richly encrusted with the same metal, and crowned with beautiful plumes of various colours; both which maintained a kind of mysterious superiority over the symbols of the lesser ensigns. It was always surrounded by a chosen body of the nobility, as on its conservation depended victory or defeat, the Mexicans never looking upon themselves as completely vanquished while they retained in their hands this emblem of their honour and valour.

The sight of such a myriad of enemies could not fail to appear formidable to an handful of men, already broken by misfortunes; but, instead of intimidating, it served only to inflame the ardour of the Spaniards, who were all fully persuaded, that the enemy here made their last push, and that on the fortune of this field depended not only their lives, but all their future hopes of wealth and fame. Cortez examined the countenances of his people, with that look which inspires confidence better than words, and finding them eager on vengeance, exclaimed, "We must all now either die or conquer:—the cause of our God fight for us!"—He had no time to utter more words, the soldiers impatiently demanding the signal to engage. He did not allow their ardour to cool, but immediately advanced with his front extended, and united the main body with the cavalry on the wings, giving charge to the latter to be careful of the rear and flanks. In this order he rushed upon the enemy, after a fortunate discharge of the fire-arms and cross-bows, which made the Mexican battalions in front reel back upon the second line. The consequent disorder was happily improved by the cavalry, who penetrated into the midst of the enemy, and opened a path for the infantry to follow. The Tlascalans, animated by the example of the Spaniards, threw themselves into the thickest of the battle, with an insatiable thirst after Mexican blood, singling out those who appeared to be leaders. The slaughter was terrible, but no hope of victory appeared; the Mexicans advancing with surprizing resolution to supply the places of those who fell, and continually renewing the combat with fresh troops. The Spaniards, though successful in every attack, saw no end of their toils, and were ready to sink under the fatigue of fighting, when Cortez, by a fortunate instance of mental recollection supported by valour, at once decided the dispute. At the head of a select body of horse, accompanied by four of his bravest officers, he forced his way towards the royal standard, on which he had heard depended the issue of the battle, with an impetuosity that bore down every thing before it. The body of nobles who guarded

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guarded the standard made a desperate resistance, but were at last broken; and Cortez, closing with the captain-general, at one stroke of his lance tumbled him, mortally wounded, from his litter! while Juan de Salamanca, a private soldier, but a gentleman by birth, whose name deserves to be transmitted to posterity, seized the imperial ensign, which he gave into the hands of his general, and bravely dismounting, put an end to the life of the Mexican commander.

The consequences of this blow were exactly what had been expected. The moment that their leader fell, and the standard, towards which all had directed their eyes, disappeared, an universal panic seized the Mexicans; every other ensign was lowered; every soldier threw down his arms, and all betook themselves to a precipitate flight, seeking for shelter in the neighbouring mountains, the adjacent woods, and fields of green maize. The Spaniards pursued their victory with all the rigours of war, making a terrible destruction of the fugitives. Twenty thousand of the Mexicans are said to have fallen in the battle and pursuit, among whom were many persons of distinction, who had come dressed in their richest ornaments, as to an assured triumph; so that the booty acquired by the Spaniards was very considerable; and as Cortez gave it all to the soldiers in reward of their valour, it was some compensation for the wealth which they had lost in their retreat, or left in Mexico*.

As soon as the general could recall his troops from the pillage of the field, he pursued his march, lest the enemy should have time to recover their confusion, and give him farther annoyance. He was sensible they would not venture again on a pitched battle, but even their skirmishing might prove dangerous to men almost spent with fatigue. He made all possible dispatch; but it was impracticable that day to get beyond the Mexican confines, and till he left these behind he could expect no security. It was necessary to make allowance for the wounded, and to give them time for rest, after being exhausted with loss of blood: the general therefore took possession of nine houses, at some distance from the field of battle, where he passed the night unmolested, but not without apprehensions, and next morning he was so fortunate as to find the roads entirely abandoned by the enemy. The same day he reached the frontiers of Tlascala, after one of the most celebrated retreats recorded in history, and a victory to which there is no parallel in the annals of mankind. The whole army expressed their joy and triumph by loud acclamations, and the Tlascalans threw themselves upon their faces, kissing the ground, to express the pleasure they felt in returning victorious to their native country, and their sense of the hardships, the toils, and perils which they had sustained. They proceeded immediately to Gualipar, a considerable town belonging to the republic, and were met on the road by the inhabitants, who received them with open arms, accommodated them in their houses, and furnished them with abundance of the best provisions that the country afforded. Cortez accepted the invitation; but as he could not be certain that the republic

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 20. Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 3.

still entertained the same friendly sentiments towards the Spaniards, he quartered his soldiers with great caution, and kept as strict watch as if in an enemy's country *.

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At this place the general made a short speech to his army, on the importance of preserving the friendship of the Tlascalans, and the necessity of cultivating it by acts of kindness and civility, studiously avoiding every cause of offence, as an injury to the meanest inhabitant might endanger their common safety; and in order to set an example of respect, as well as to relieve his own mind from that uncertainty and solicitude under which it laboured, he resolved to transmit immediately to the senate of Tlascala an account of his retreat and success. But fame had already carried the news of his victory, without diminution of his glory; and before the messengers could set out came the sage Magiscatzin, the venerable Xicotencal, his son, and other senators, to visit Cortez on the part of the republic. They all saluted him with the most cordial expressions of friendship, except Xicotencal the younger, who appeared cold and reserved in his compliments; a behaviour which, though at that time ascribed to the ruggedness of a military man, soon appeared to be the effect of jealousy and distrust. Magiscatzin, as the senator first in authority, informed Cortez that the republic had assembled an army of thirty thousand men to succour him against the common enemy; and assured him, that he might depend upon the whole strength of Tlascala and her allies, to assist him in taking vengeance on the traitorous Mexicans.

It gave Cortez no small satisfaction to find, that the attachment of the republic to the Spaniards was as strong as when they marched in a more prosperous condition towards Mexico, and he expressed his acknowledgments in the warmest terms that real gratitude could dictate. The Tlascalans were now sensible that the Spaniards were neither immortal nor invincible, as their disastrous retreat sufficiently attested; but they considered that only as an accident of war, and any impression it had made was entirely effaced by the victory at Otumba, which even heightened their admiration of the Spanish valour and conduct. They invited Cortez to their city, where his quarters were already provided; but they willingly admitted his apology for not immediately accepting the offer, as they were desirous to prepare for his reception, having resolved to celebrate his entry with the same solemnities used in the triumphal processions of their own generals.

The Spanish army continued three days at Gualipar, being liberally supplied with every necessary at the expence of the republic of Tlascala. On the fourth morning Cortez gave notice to the senate of his approach; and the sick and wounded being somewhat recovered, he proceeded on his march. The Spaniards on this occasion displayed all their finery, adorning themselves with the jewels and plumes of the vanquished Mexicans; a very emphatical manner of expressing the importance of their victory. They were met by the caziques and principal members of the republic, clad in their senatorial robes, and accompanied by a numerous attendance. The roads were covered with multitudes of people, who poured

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 1.

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forth their congratulations in loud shouts, and bursts of popular applause, mingled with reproaches on the Mexicans, and encomiums on the valour of the Spaniards. When they entered the city they were saluted with the sound of various instruments of music, all expressive of exultation and triumph. After the troops were conveniently quartered, Magiscatzin insisted on having Cortez for his guest, while old Xicotencal paid the same compliment to Alvarado, whose valour, strength, and activity had been extolled to him by the auxiliary Tlascalans. The evening was spent in festivity and joy, concluding with a ball, and certain dances in matquerade; the diversion of the multitude, whose disorderly noisy mirth finished the demonstrations of their applause*.

The esteem of the Tlascalans for the Spaniards was greatly increased, by the liberality with which Cortez and his followers shared with them the jewels and other ornaments taken in the battle of Otumba; which were peculiarly acceptable to them, as being spoils of their most inveterate, and most formidable enemy. But in the midst of this intercourse of civilities, both the Spaniards and Tlascalans were plunged into despondency. Cortez was seized with a burning fever, in consequence of a contusion on the forehead, received in the late engagement; the perpetual fatigue he had undergone, and the unremitting vigilance with which he watched over his people. The Spaniards dreaded the issue of his distemper, as upon him they rested their future fortune, while the Tlascalans bewailed him as a hero worthy of immortality. The senate assembled the physicians most celebrated for their knowledge of the medicinal plants of Tlascala, in which all their skill consisted, and promised them the highest rewards, if they succeeded in restoring the general's health. This they undertook, with a confidence which appears to have been well-founded; for by means of their cooling applications, and the natural strength of his constitution, a favourable crisis was produced, and Cortez was soon able to appear in public, to the inexpressible joy of all parties†.

The first care of Cortez after his recovery was to inquire into the state of the settlement at Villa Rica, the foundation of all his remaining hopes; and he had the satisfaction to learn, that nothing had happened, either in the garrison or on the coast, that could give him any uneasiness. But, at the same time, he received the disagreeable intelligence, that a party of nine men, dispatched to Tlascala for the share of the Mexican gold allotted to the garrison, were not returned, and it was reported they had been surprised, and cut off in the mountains; that it was to be feared the same fate had likewise befallen the wounded soldiers of Narvaez's army, amounting to upwards of forty, as they had marched away in small parties as soon as they recovered, in order to join their companions in Mexico, which they eagerly sought as the centre of their wishes.

This intelligence, which proved to be too true, gave Cortez infinite concern. The loss of fifty men, at a time when the life of every Spaniard was of importance, was severely felt by the whole army. But circumstances occurred which

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 1. Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 3.

† Id. ibid.

prevented

prevented them from brooding over their misfortunes. It was soon known, that the party which guarded the treasure had actually been murdered in the province of Tepeaca, which had thrown off, at the instigation of the Mexicans, the allegiance promised to the crown of Spain. There appeared a necessity for punishing this act of infidelity and violence, and of reducing the province to obedience, as all intercourse between Villa Rica and Mexico, towards which Cortez's ambition still pointed, would otherwise be obstructed; and it fortunately happened that the Tlascalans had equal cause of complaint against the Tepeacans, who had lately made an irruption into the territories of the republic. The senate therefore came to a resolution to chastise them, and to crave the assistance of the Spaniards for that purpose, at the same time that Cortez was deliberating how to engage the republic in his revenge.

While both parties were preparing for signal vengeance, advice was brought to Tlascala, that ambassadors from the new emperor of Mexico to the republic were arrived on the frontiers, and waited for permission to advance to the capital. The Tlascalans were not ignorant that the purport of this embassy was to detach them from the alliance of the Spaniards; but, though the senate remained unshaken on that point, it was determined to give audience to the ambassadors, that so flattering an acknowledgment of their equality, and of the condescension of the court of Mexico, might be rendered conspicuous to all the neighbouring nations. The Mexican envoys made their entry with great solemnity, and were introduced to the senate with the usual formalities. After naming their master with profound submission, they proposed of peace and perpetual friendship between the two nations, freedom of commerce, and a community of interests, on condition that the republic should join the emperor against the Spaniards. This proposition was no sooner made, than a murmur of disapprobation ran through the whole assembly, and the ambassadors were ordered to withdraw; after which it was resolved, by way of answer, That the republic would admit the peace with all possible respect, provided the conditions were reasonable, and consistent with the honour of both nations; but that no interest could seduce the Tlascalans to violate the laws of hospitality, or perfidiously betray the voluntary friendship conceived for the Spaniards, confirmed by an exchange of obligations, and sealed by the most sacred engagements. This reply would have been sufficient seriously to convince the Mexicans that their embassy must prove ineffectual; but they did not stay to receive it: afraid of a popular tumult, they privately withdrew, and retired with all expedition beyond the boundaries of the republic.

The disappointment of the Mexicans was the occasion of triumph to the Spaniards, as it afforded them a convincing proof of the firm attachment of the Tlascalans. It was soon however discovered, that all the senators were not equally sincere in their professions of friendship. Young Xicotencal could never forget that he had been foiled by Cortez in the military art, on his skill in which he founded his highest reputation: he considered the superiority of the Spanish general, as a real injury to himself, as it diminished his consequence; and he appears besides to have had more distinct views of the interests of his

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country, and a more jealous eye towards public liberty than any other of his countrymen. In the senate he concealed his sentiments from a consciousness that they would not be listened to, and a fear of embroiling himself unnecessarily with Cortez; but he represented privately to his friends and adherents, with a design of bringing over the people in general, that the peace proposed by the Mexicans was perfectly advantageous, as the emperor offered many privileges, and requested no condition, but what the senate ought to accede to for the public good. "Should we even," said he, "forgive these strangers their evil intentions against our religion, have we not still reason to resent their endeavours to change our laws and government, by converting into a monarchy this venerable republic, and reducing us under the odious dominion of an emperor? a yoke which we have thrown off at the expence of our blood, and which it grieves us to see even on the necks of our most inveterate enemies!"

These sentiments he lost no opportunity of inculcating, and enforced with so much eloquence, that he soon gained such a formidable party as encouraged him to become more public in his declarations. The senate had intelligence of his designs, and took the matter into consideration, with that seriousness which it required. They all condemned him, as a person who endeavoured to disturb the public peace, disgrace the resolutions of the supreme council, and stain with dishonour the national character. Some gave it as their opinion that he deserved death, among which number was his venerable father, whose honourable constancy, and inflexible justice, had such an influence on the minds of the senators, that they agreed to mitigate the punishment. They ordered the offender to be brought prisoner to the bar of the senate; and after reprimanding him for his treasonous practices, made him deliver up his truncheon, and deprived him of his commission, with all the privileges belonging to it, by the ceremony of throwing him down the stairs of the tribunal. The ignominy of this degradation made him sensible, in a few days, that he had no method of recovering his consequence among his countrymen, except through the intercession of the person against whom all his schemes were levelled; and by the mediation of Cortez, to whom he condescended to apply, renewing his professions of friendship, he was again restored to his honours and employments*.

No sooner had Cortez surmounted the dangers, to which he was exposed by the machinations of Xicotencal, than his courage and perseverance were exposed to a new trial. When every thing was ready, on the part of the republic, for chastising the Tepeacans, the Spanish soldiers who had come under Narvaez, and who were chiefly planters, strenuously opposed a fresh expedition. The remembrance of past fatigues and perils made them averse to new exploits: they sighed after repose, and their possessions in the island of Cuba, formally requiring to be led back to Villa Rica, and put on board the fleet. Cortez ordered them to be assembled; and perceiving they were only to be influenced by motives of interest or of fear, he told them, that the enemy had secured the passes in the mountains, so as to render the march to Villa Rica impracticable, except by wading through rivers of blood, and

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 2. Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 4.

encountering

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encountering the greatest danger and difficulties; that, if they persisted in making such a retreat, they must rely on their own strength, as it was highly improbable the Tlascalans would support a measure so contradictory to their wishes, and indeed equally destructive of the honour and interest of the Spaniards and the republic: he therefore advised them, to preserve the friendship of the Tlascalans, by entering cheerfully on the expedition against the Tepeacans, as the only rational means by which their design of returning to Villa Rica could be accomplished; and he promised, in the strongest terms, that as soon as they had reduced the Tepeacans, all who were not willing to follow his fortune should have liberty to depart. But it was his duty, he added, as their general, to keep them from running into such imminent danger, as was unavoidable, if they began their march in the present posture of affairs. By these arguments, in which he discovered a perfect knowledge of the human heart, and the motives which generally impel to action, Cortez engaged them to co-operate in his designs, from a persuasion that ruin would follow the immediate prosecution of their own inclinations.

As soon as the malcontents gave their consent to his proposal, Cortez selected eight thousand Tlascalans, commanded by officers whose valour and fidelity he had experienced in divers engagements with the Mexicans, leaving the care of assembling the main body of the Tlascalan army to Xicotencal, whose friendship he hoped he had secured by his late generosity. With this force, four hundred and twenty Spanish foot, and sixteen horse, he began his march, and halted that night at a village within the enemies frontiers, at the distance of five miles from Tepeaca, the capital of the province of the same name. Here he took some of the peasants prisoners, and by kindness and presents prevailed on them to carry a message to the caziques and chief men of Tepeaca, acquainting them, that he was come at the head of an army, in order to revenge the death of the Spaniards, whom they had so barbarously and treacherously murdered, and also to chastise their revolt, contrary to the obedience they had sworn to the king of Castile; but, provided they would take up arms against the Mexicans, and join in alliance with the Spaniards and Tlascalans, that he would pardon their heinous transgression, and receive them into friendship, securing them from that terrible vengeance which hung over them, and which would otherwise be executed with all the rigours of war.

The answer returned by the Tepeacans was an insolent defiance, accompanied with a threat, that they would instantly take the field in quest of the Spaniards, whom they would carry bound to the altars of their gods. Cortez repeated his proposal, and received an answer still more insolent. On this he led his army towards the capital, fully resolved to desolate it with fire and sword. The Tepeacans, reinforced by a body of Mexicans, lay in ambush on the way; but their impatience discovering them, they were attacked with such fury as quickly put them into disorder, and all who could not save themselves by flight were cut in pieces. Recovering however from their surprise, they rallied in a manner very unusual among barbarians, and renewed the battle with great obstinacy. They

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suffered a second defeat; after which both the Mexicans and Tepeacans, in arms, abandoned the country, leaving the whole province entirely at the mercy of the conquerors. The inhabitants of Tepeaca were so much terrified at the discomfiture and retreat of the army, that they immediately sent deputies with their submission to Cortez; requesting, that he would not wreak his vengeance on an innocent people, misguided and forced into hostilities against the Spaniards by their leaders, who were entirely in the interest and at the disposal of the emperor of Mexico. On this representation Cortez marched to the capital; received the homage of the people in the name of his Catholic majesty, whom he ordered to be proclaimed; pardoned their transgression; took them under his protection; and by his well-timed lenity, gained their friendship and confidence.

As the principal object of this expedition was, to secure a free communication between Villa Rica and Mexico, Cortez no sooner found himself master of Tepeaca, than he ordered a trench, fortified with palisades, to be drawn round the city; and not only raised works for the defence of those quarters least fortified by nature, but erected a kind of citadel, in order to secure the town against the assaults of the Mexicans. In this fortress he left a garrison, calling the place *Segura de la Frontera*, "the Security of the Frontier," which was the second Spanish settlement in the Mexican empire*. But while we admire the prudence and courage of Cortez in bringing this enterprise to so desirable a conclusion, we must blame his cruel severity, in ordering the prisoners of war to be sold as slaves, while he extended his pardon towards the citizens.

A few days after the Spaniards had taken up their quarters in Tepeaca, Xicotencatl arrived with the main body of the Tlascalan army. The presence of such a multitude of enemies, computed at fifty thousand, greatly alarmed and distressed the Tepeacans; a circumstance which determined Cortez to find employment for his troops. He accordingly divided the Tlascalans into several bodies, which he detached against certain strong holds in the province of Tepeaca that had not yet surrendered, and which were garrisoned by Mexicans. Each battalion was attended by about thirty Spaniards, who had instructions to use force, if persuasion should not answer the purpose of bringing the enemy to submission. The orders were punctually executed; and though the enemy every where made a shew of resistance, all the places were reduced, with very inconsiderable loss. An incredible number of prisoners were taken, besides much booty, with which, and the sale of the captives, the officers employed in this service were enriched†.

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But while the Spaniards were thus pushing their conquests, a revolution happened in Mexico by no means favourable to the hopes of Cortez. This was the death of the emperor Quetzlavaca; who though an inveterate enemy to the Spaniards, was a prince of no great abilities. His successor was a person of

* Herrera, dec. II, lib. viii. c. 4. De Solis, lib. v. c. 3.
lib. v. c. 4.

† De Solis,

a very superior character. The Mexicans immediately cast their eyes on Guatimozin, nephew and son-in-law of Montezuma, on whom they with one voice conferred the imperial ensigns. His high reputation for valour and talents had pointed him out to the choice of his countrymen in this dangerous crisis, and he was no sooner seated on the throne than he shewed himself worthy of the supreme command. Though only twenty-five years old, he devoted himself entirely to the cares of government, and discovered an equal knowledge of civil and military affairs. He was perfectly acquainted with the transactions of Cortez in the provinces, and thence conjectured his ultimate designs: he saw the storm that was gathering, and he began his reign with providing against it. He fortified the city of Mexico in the best manner of which his subjects were capable; he laid up in his magazines great store of arms and provisions; and he intimated to the inhabitants of every province of his empire, how much it concerned them to unite, in order to deliver themselves from the tyranny of the strangers. He encouraged the soldiers by rewards and honours, and he gained the affections of the people by promising them an exemption from the oppressive taxes imposed during the late reign. He ingratiated himself with the nobility, by admitting them freely into his presence, and by moderating that excess of homage, approaching to adoration, which his predecessors so rigidly exacted from their vassals. He made presents to the caziques on the frontiers, exhorting them to fidelity, and the defence of their governments; and that they might not have reason to complain that he left the whole load of the war upon them, he sent an army of thirty thousand men for their support and encouragement*.

Cortez had notice of all these particulars; but supported as he now was by a large army of confederate Indians, who had acquired the habit of acting in conjunction with the Spaniards, such intelligence, instead of discouraging him from prosecuting the conquest of the Mexican empire, only roused him to a vigorous exertion of his abilities. Messengers had been sent by the cazique of Guacachula, a populous city in the road to Mexico, considered by the new emperor as one of the bulwarks of his dominions, acquainting Cortez that an army of Mexicans was arrived there, committing such violences, as obliged the inhabitants to have recourse to the protection of the Spaniards. The cazique urged, as a claim to the assistance of Cortez, that he was one of the nobles who promised obedience to the king of Spain in the assembly held by Montezuma; and that he had ever since favoured the cause of the Spaniards, for which he was now punished with the utmost rigour. From the messengers Cortez learned, that twenty thousand Mexicans were quartered in their city and its district, and ten thousand more in Yzucan, a neighbouring town; and as he was not only convinced of the sin-

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 4. Herrera, dec. II, lib. viii, c. 4. Some authors ascribe these measures to Quetlavaca; but Herrera, whose authority, in this case, ought to be of great weight, expressly affirms, that, Quetlavaca having died of the small pox, (which was introduced by the Spaniards into America, and made great havock among the inhabitants) "all those things were done by Guatimozin, nephew to Montezuma;"—and in this opinion he is supported by de Solis. Ut supra.

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cerity of the cazique, but sensible of the necessity of expelling the enemy, and of subjecting the frontier towns, before a greater force could be sent to defend them, he instantly determined on the enterprise.

Cortez's vigour in acting was not inferior to his promptitude in resolving. He formed the same day an army of three hundred Spanish foot, twelve horse, and above thirty thousand Tlascalans, under the command of Christopher de Olid, whom he dispatched next morning for Guacachula. Olid marched with great expedition to within six leagues of the city, where the mutinous spirit of some of his people obliged him to halt. A rumour prevailed among the peasants, that the emperor of Mexico was in full march, at the head of a great army, to relieve the towns garrisoned by his troops; which gained so much credit among the Spanish soldiers, and produced such an effect on the minds of men tired out with what they deemed fruitless victories, that they refused to proceed. This, with other concurring circumstances, obliged Cortez to join the main army, and conduct the expedition in person. Every thing wore a new aspect on his arrival; all fears, discontents, and jealousies vanished; and the soldiers to a man declared, that they would die by the side of their general. He immediately prosecuted his march, giving notice to the cazique of Guacachula of his approach. The Mexicans were posted on the farther side of the city; but on receiving the first notice of the Spaniards, they drew up in order of battle, and boldly advanced beyond the city, to dispute a pass. Both armies engaged with ardour, and the combat was maintained with obstinacy; the Mexicans not only defending themselves with vigour, but intrepidly advancing upon their enemies, with all the signs of a determined resolution to stand their ground to the utmost. Victory continued doubtful, when the cazique of Guacachula seized this opportunity of proving the sincerity of his professions, by falling upon the enemy's rear, at the same time that his people annoyed them with darts and arrows from the walls. The Mexicans were broken, and defeated with great slaughter, leaving more than half their number upon the field*.

Cortez quartered the Spaniards within the city of Guacachula, and without the walls the Tlascalans, and other confederates, whose numbers daily increased. His reputation was now so great among the Indians, that several caziques, whom he had compelled to acknowledge the king of Spain, came voluntarily with their troops to serve under his command; and his army was so much augmented before he left Guacachula, that it amounted, according to his own account, to one hundred and twenty thousand men. With all this force he advanced towards Yzucan, which contained, as he had been informed, a garrison of ten thousand Mexicans, besides those who escaped from the battle. The place was strong by nature, and fortified by walls and ravelines, which obstructed the passes between the mountains. Before it ran a river, which the Spaniards were obliged to pass, and the enemy had broken down the bridge, with a resolution of defending the banks. Olid, who commanded the van, threw himself

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 4.

into this river, gained the opposite bank, under a shower of darts and arrows, and drove the enemy from their posts, after receiving a wound in his thigh, and having his horse killed under him. It was expected the city would make a vigorous defence, and the height of the walls made the Spaniards apprehensive that the assault would be bloody; but so great was the panic infused into the Mexican garrison, upon the flight of the party appointed to dispute the passage of the river, that, though they had driven forth all the suspected citizens, with an intention of holding out to the utmost, they immediately betook themselves to flight, and left Yzucan as the reward of the conquerors. The general by this time was come up with the main body; and suspecting a stratagem, he ordered a body of Tlascalans to examine the place, which they found entirely abandoned. On this discovery, Cortez published a general pardon to such as should return to their habitations. It was readily accepted: the town was soon filled with people; and the same conduct being observed in other expeditions, a great number of cities and provinces submitted to his Catholic majesty*.

These successes, which gave Cortez the command of the Mexican frontier, encouraged him to think of renewing his attack on the capital, and a series of fortunate incidents enabled him to put it in execution. As he was sensible that it would be in vain to attempt the reduction of Mexico, unless he could secure the command of the lake, he had given orders to Martin Lopez, to prepare in the mountains of Tlascala materials for building twelve brigantines, in such manner as to be carried thither in pieces, ready to be put together, and launched when he stood in need of their service. These were now in great forwardness, by the ingenuity and activity of that able mechanic; and the general, soon after his return to Segura de la Frontera, received an unexpected reinforcement. Not once doubting of the success of Narvaez, Velasquez had sent two ships after him with new instructions, and a supply of men and military stores. Pedro Cavellero, Sandoval's lieutenant at Villa Rica, went out in a boat to reconnoitre them on their arrival; and understanding the design of their voyage, artfully decoyed them into the harbour, seized the vessels, and made the crew prisoners. The soldiers were sent under a guard to Segura de la Frontera, and readily agreed to join their countrymen, and follow the fortune of Cortez†.

Nor was this the only reinforcement which that gallant commander received, by singular and unexpected means, before he renewed his attempt upon Mexico. On his return to Tlascala, whither he was called by the death of Magiscatzin, he was informed that three ships of more considerable force were arrived at Villa Rica. These belonged to an armament fitted out by Francisco de Garay, governor of Jamaica, who had long aimed at intruding into some district of New Spain, in hopes of dividing with Cortez the wealth of that rich country, and the glory of annexing it to the crown of Spain. They steered their course to the northward, and the troops landed in the province of Panuco; but the country seemed so poor, and the

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 4. Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 5.
lib. v. c. 5.

† De Solis,

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natives were so fierce, that the invaders were glad to make their escape. Soon after they put to sea, the ships were separated in a storm; and, what is truly extraordinary, the persons on board all three, officers and private men, without being acquainted with each other's intention, came unanimously to a resolution of joining Cortez the moment they came on shore. They all landed safely at Villa Rica, and made the best of their way for Tlascala; where the army was also joined by the crew of a trading vessel from the Canaries, after the general had purchased the cargo, consisting of military stores and other necessaries, which were to him invaluable in his present circumstances*.

From these various quarters Cortez received a supply of near two hundred men, which enabled him to dismiss such of Narvaez's soldiers as remained with reluctance in his service. No sooner had he got rid of the malcontents, than he issued orders to the confederate Indians to hold themselves in readiness; and, as he had yet received no answer to the dispatches sent to Spain, by Montejo and Portocarrero, he thought it necessary to enforce his solicitations in a letter to Charles V. containing a faithful recital of all his adventures, prosperous and adverse, from the time he first quitted Zempoalla, till his retreat from Mexico, together with an account of his present condition and designs, and an earnest request for succours, as well as for speedy justice against the governors of Jamaica and Cuba. This letter was accompanied with a second present of gold and jewels, to which the soldiers voluntarily contributed. A ship was equipped with all expedition to carry the dispatches to Europe; and that nothing might be omitted which could promote his designs, the general applied also for succours to the royal audience of St. Domingo, as that tribunal had always favoured his expedition, and used its utmost endeavours to defeat the attempts of Velasquez†.

Nothing places the fortitude of Cortez in so strong a light as that uncertainty under which he laboured in regard to the resolutions of the court of Spain. Nor would the knowledge of the fate of his dispatches have afforded him consolation. Portocarrero and Montejo, seconded by Martin Cortez, the general's father, had paid long and fruitless attendance on the Spanish ministry. The intricate and unsettled state of the kingdom, and the time of their arrival, turned the whole attention of the court upon matters more immediately interesting; while the strong faction formed by the friends of Velasquez, at the head of which was Fonseca, bishop of Burgos, threw almost insurmountable obstructions in the way of the negotiation. Though the deputies, by dint of perseverance, had obtained the honour of an audience of the emperor, who informed himself exactly of the transactions in New Spain, and thence conceived a very favourable idea of the character and capacity of the general, the variety of business in which Charles was then engaged prevented him from entering into the merits of the dispute between Cortez and Velasquez; and as the emperor departed for the Netherlands soon after this audience, the pretensions of the general were referred to cardinal

* De Solis, lib. iv. c. 17. Herrera, dec. II. lib. viii. c. 5.
lib. viii. c. 5. De Solis, lib. v. c. 6.

† Herrera, dec. II.

Adriano, governor of Spain during his majesty's absence. The cardinal was sincerely desirous to do justice to the merit of Cortez; but as all the information by which he was to regulate himself in judging of the matter recommended to his examination must pass through the council of the Indies, of which the bishop of Burgos was president, he found himself embarrassed how to proceed. The disturbances of the state conspired to divert the attention of Adriano; so that Martin Cortez and the deputies, tired out with fruitless solicitations, at last withdrew from court, and retired to Medellin, with a resolution to let the storm blow over, and wait the return of the emperor*, who did not visit Spain till long after the arrival of the second dispatches.

But Cortez, though still uncertain whether he should be condemned as a traitor, or rewarded as the faithful servant of his king, prepared to renew his enterprise against Mexico with as much ardour, as if he had been encouraged by the highest assurances of royal favour. With this view he assembled a council of war, in which it was resolved to march directly to Tezeuco, and at all events to gain possession of that city, as the most proper station for launching the brigantines, as well as for making his approaches to the capital. There it was determined to establish the head quarters; to wait for reinforcements; to examine the enemy's strength, and consider more at leisure the means of accomplishing the principal undertaking.

The day after this resolution Cortez mustered his Spanish troops, and found that they amounted to five hundred and forty foot, four-score of which were armed with muskets or cross-bows, forty horse, and a train of nine field-pieces, brought from on board the fleet. This muster was performed in the manner of a general review with much pomp and shew, in the sight of an innumerable multitude of people, who expressed their admiration of the Spanish discipline by repeated acclamations. Xicotencal, general of the republic, mustered his troops in the same manner. First passed the drums and trumpets, and the rest of the warlike instruments used by the Tlascalans; then the captains in files, gaily adorned with large plumes of various colours, and jewels hanging at their ears and lips: they carried their Macanas, or two-handed swords, under the left arm, with their points upward, and every one had a page bearing his shield, on which were portrayed different figures, expressing their own exploits, and the defeat of their enemies. After their manner, they complimented the two generals, and the troops marched by in different bodies, distinguished by the colour of their plumes, and by their ensigns. The whole army consisted of ten thousand chosen men, the rest of the forces of the republic being left to assist in conducting the brigantines; a service of the utmost importance, and with which the senate was proud to be entrusted†.

After publishing certain regulations for the better preservation of order and discipline among the troops, and making a short speech to the army, Cortez began his march, and took up his quarters that night at a place called Tezmeluca,

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 1, and lib. v. c. 7.

† De Solis, lib. v. c. 9.

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about six leagues from Tlascala. It was a considerable town situated on the Mexican confines, and in the jurisdiction of Guaxocingo, the cazique of which province made ample provision for the troops. Next day Cortez continued his march, in the enemy's country, with all necessary precaution, and received advice towards evening that the Mexican army was assembled on the other side of a mountain, whose woods and rocks rendered the passage to the road of Tezeuco very difficult: he therefore resolved to halt till morning, before he attempted to ascend the eminence; and day discovered the prudence of this precaution. The enemy had blocked up all the passes of the mountain with trees cut down and laid across, and sharp stakes fixed in the ground, to wound and incommode the cavalry. Undaunted at these obstructions, the general ordered two thousand Tlascalans to join the vanguard, in order to clear the road; a service which they executed with so much expedition, that the rear of the army scarce seemed to halt.

From the brow of this mountain the Spaniards could discover the great lake of Mexico, the capital, and all the attendant cities; and Cortez took occasion to remind his soldiers of the prosperity and riches which they had enjoyed, as well as of the calamities they had suffered in that neighbourhood, endeavouring to rouse them, at once by motives of avarice and revenge. They likewise discovered, in more distant towns, some fires, which they considered as signals of their approach, and in the intermediate plain, the vast multitude of the Mexican army, seemingly resolved to dispute their march. The Spanish soldiers rejoiced at the opportunity of coming so soon to action, and the eagerness of the Tlascalans for the fight was so great, that Cortez was with difficulty able to restrain their ardour within the bounds of discipline. But on the nearer approach of the Spaniards, the Mexicans, seeing them attended by so strong a force, abandoned their resolution of disputing the passage of the valley, and betook themselves to a precipitate flight, while Cortez pursued his march towards Tezeuco, at which he arrived without farther obstruction*.

Before Cortez reached this city, he was met by messengers from the king, or cazique, with proposals of confederacy, and intelligence that quarters were provided for his troops. Who the prince was that made this proposition, the original historians do not distinctly inform us; though there is reason to believe that Cazumazin, who had formerly conspired the destruction of the Spaniards, and who was deposed by Montezuma, through the influence of Cortez, had now recovered the throne of Tezeuco, and was countenanced by the reigning emperor. However this may have been, Cortez certainly suspected the sincerity of the offer; for which reason, though he returned a civil answer, he took up his quarters in a neighbouring village, keeping strict watch for fear of being surprised. Next morning he entered the city, which he found entirely open, and defenceless; the king, whose designs were actually treacherous, having fled to the Mexican army on learning that the Spaniards were supported by so great a body of Tlascalans.

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 10.

The first care of Cortez was to conciliate the good-will of the people, which he did so effectually that the nobility soon desired permission to make an offer of their friendship and obedience. Their request was readily granted; and they came in solemn procession, headed by a youth of genteel mien, who spoke for the rest, and told the general, that he presented to him this troop of soldiers, willing to serve in his army, and desirous to merit by their actions a shelter under the shade of his ensigns. Cortez heard him with admiration, and with much satisfaction learned, that he was the lawful heir of the principality, the present king having first ascended the throne by the murder of his elder brother. Immediately perceiving the advantage which might be derived from this circumstance, especially as Cacumazin was become odious to his subjects, he called together the nobles, and placing the young prince by his side, addressed them to the following purport:

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“ You have before you, my friends, the lawful son of your lawful king. The unjust master, to whose ill-acquired power you pay a forced obedience, seized the sceptre of Tezeuco with a hand dyed in the blood of his elder brother; and, as the art of preserving dominion is unknown to an usurper, he has governed by the same violence by which he made his way to the throne, little caring how much he deserved the hatred of his subjects, provided he made them fear him, and treating those as slaves who bore with his crimes. But at length, by basely abandoning you in time of danger, and neglecting your defence, he hath at once shewn his own want of courage, and put it in your power to escape from his tyranny. I might, if I were so inclined, take advantage of your defenceless condition, and use the rights of war, by subjecting this city, which I hold as you see, at the mercy of my sword; but the last necessity only can make the Spaniards punish with rigour; and as he who intended us the injury was not really your king, you ought not to suffer as his vassals, nor for his offence, nor ought this prince to remain without the kingdom to which his birth entitles him. Receive then, from my hand, the king whom you before received from Heaven. Pay to him, for my sake, that obedience which you owe him, as the rightful successor of his father, and place him on the throne of his ancestors; for as I less regard my own conveniency, than I do equity and justice, I desire his friendship more than his kingdom, and your satisfaction rather than your subjection.”

This proposal was received by the nobles with universal applause, and next day was appointed for the coronation of the prince. Cortez assisted at the solemnity, delivering the sceptre into the hands of the young king, and placing the crown upon his head; a master-stroke of policy, by which he at once secured the affections of the people, and gained a more absolute sway over them, than if he had actually conquered them. The nobles declared themselves his friends, and vowed enmity against the Mexicans: the city was soon re-peopled, by the return of such families as had fled on the approach of the Spaniards; and the king himself seemed at a loss how to express his gratitude, appearing in the

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general's presence with all the obsequiousness of a subject, and taking no resolution without consulting him*.

Cortez, having thus settled every thing in Tezeuco perfectly to his satisfaction, employed part of his troops in widening and deepening the canal which conveyed the waters of the lake to that city, in order to facilitate the launching of the brigantines, while with the rest he endeavoured to circumscribe the Mexican power. With this view he marched at the head of three hundred Spaniards, and ten thousand Tlascalans, to attack the city of Iztacpalapa, already described, which afforded shelter to a number of canoes that daily annoyed his workmen. On his approach, he discovered a body of eight thousand armed men at a little distance from the walls, who came gallantly out into the open field, and stood an engagement, though inferior in number, with so much courage as enabled them to retreat gradually towards the city. Cortez suspected a stratagem, by seeing the gates left open: he therefore pursued with all imaginable caution; and finding the city entirely deserted on the side towards the land, made dispositions for maintaining himself there during the ensuing night. But no sooner did darkness draw on, than the Spaniards perceived the canals begin to overflow their banks, the waters rushing impetuously into the lower grounds; a circumstance which led them to conjecture, that the enemy had opened their sluices with an intention to drown that part of the city. The danger was imminent; and Cortez instantly gave orders for retreating with all expedition, not a little mortified at being outwitted by a people whom he considered as barbarous.

The stratagem of the Mexicans was indeed laid with admirable judgment: they not only sallied out to provoke the Spaniards, feigned a retreat to draw them into danger, after maintaining for a while the unequal combat with obstinacy, but abandoned their houses, which they endeavoured to lay under water, in order to destroy the enemy, and had provided a great army to prevent the possibility of a retreat, and complete the ruin of their invaders. By this army, which he had eluded in the evening by his precipitate retreat, Cortez found himself surrounded next morning when his troops were very unfit for battle, having passed the night in a wet and disagreeable condition. Animated, however by a spirit of vengeance, the Spaniards charged with irresistible fury, nor were the Tlascalans wanting in their duty: the Mexicans were broken, and obliged to leave the field with considerable loss; but they again rallied, and harassed the confederates in their march, till they arrived in the neighbourhood of Tezeuco†.

This retreat was deemed inglorious by the Spaniards, who had now long been accustomed to success, without a single failure in any attack. But they had soon an opportunity of vindicating the reputation of their arms. Most of the cities adjacent to Mexico were originally the capitals of small independent states, and some of them having been but lately annexed to the Mexican empire, still retained the remembrance of their ancient liberty, and bore with impatience

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 11, 12. Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 1.
lib. v. c. 12. Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 1.

† De Solis,

rigorous yoke of their new masters. Cortez had early observed symptoms of this disaffection; and by confidently offering to deliver them from the odious dominion of the Mexicans, with liberal promises of more indulgent treatment, if they would join him against their oppressors, he prevailed on the people of several neighbouring districts to acknowledge the king of Castile as their sovereign. Among these were the provinces of Chalco and Otumba, from which Cortez received messengers the day after his return from the unfortunate attempt on Iztacpalapa. They informed him, that a powerful army of Mexicans was arrived on their frontiers, with a design to chastise and destroy them for having joined the Spaniards, and desired some assistance to enable them to withstand the enemy.

This request appeared not only reasonable but necessary to be granted, as it was of the utmost importance to prevent the Mexicans from establishing themselves in a country where they could cut off the communication with Tlascala. Cortez therefore instantly dispatched Gonzalo de Sandoval and Francisco de Lugo with two hundred Spanish foot, fifteen horse, and a large body of Tlascalans to the assistance of his new allies. The Mexicans had assembled all the troops of the neighbouring provinces to chastise the rebels of Chalco and Otumba, and hearing that the Spaniards were coming to their relief, had solicited a reinforcement from the troops quartered about the lake. Thus provided with a formidable army, they seized an advantageous post, in the road which the Spaniards must pass before they could join their allies. Sandoval and Lugo, adverted of their design, marched in order of battle, without altering their pace, and received the charge of the enemy with calm intrepidity; the horse were then ordered to advance, under a discharge from the fire-arms and cross-bows: the Tlascalans and Spanish foot supported the small body of cavalry, and broke the Mexicans with great slaughter. The rout soon became general; and the people of Chalco and Otumba, who had sallied out of the adjacent towns on hearing the sound of the fire-arms, coming up at the same time, the pursuit was so bloody that the Mexican army was almost entirely cut off, and the confederate provinces relieved, with little or no loss.

The Spaniards passed that night in the city of Chalco, where their victory was celebrated with the most extravagant rejoicings. The inhabitants of this province, as subjects of the Mexican emperor, were declared enemies to the Tlascalans, and had besides perpetual disputes with them about the boundaries of their territory; but all differences were now accommodated. The people of Chalco owned the obligation they were under to the Tlascalans for coming to their relief: they were also sensible, that the only means of preserving the protection of Cortez was to maintain a strict friendship with his allies: the Spaniards acted as mediators; and the chiefs of both nations being assembled, peace was concluded with all the necessary forms, and the solemnities usual on such occasions, Sandoval and Lugo undertaking to get it confirmed by Cortez, and the Tlascalans to procure its ratification on the part of the republic.

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This expedition being finished with so much glory and celerity, Sandoval and Lugo marched back to the army at Tezeuco, carrying along with them eight Mexican nobles who had been taken prisoners in the late engagement. Cortez received the two captains with particular marks of approbation, not forgetting the leaders of the Tlascalans. When the Mexican prisoners were brought before him, full of fear and confusion, he ordered them to be unbound; and desirous to make use of this opportunity, in order to justify to his allies the war which he had undertaken, by making farther advances towards a peace, and at the same time to convince his enemies of his generosity, he spoke to them, by the help of his interpreters, to the following effect:

“I might, according to the custom established in your nation, and that kind of justice upon which the laws of war are founded, take vengeance on your offences with fire and sword, treating you with the same inhumanity with which you treat your prisoners. But the Spaniards do not think that being taken in the service of one’s king is a crime that deserves punishment, knowing how to distinguish between the culpable and unfortunate; and that you may be sensible of the difference of our clemency and your cruelty, I give you at the same time both life and liberty. Repair immediately to the standard of your prince, and tell him from me, that I am come to demand satisfaction for the unjust war which he made on me, at the time of my retreat from Mexico, perfidiously breaking the treaty by which I obliged myself to leave the city, and in consequence of which hostilities were suspended; but that I come more especially to revenge the death of Montezuma, the chief cause of my anger. Tell him that I have an army reinforced not only by a number of invincible Spaniards, but by a variety of nations who abhor the Mexican tyranny;—tell him that, in a little time, I intend to seek him in the midst of his palace, surrounded by his court, bringing in my train all the horrors of war, and resolved never to lay aside my just indignation, until I have reduced all the cities in his dominions to ashes, and washed away the memory of his name with the blood of his subjects.

“But,” added he, “if Guatimozin, in order to avoid the impending ruin, is desirous of listening to terms of accommodation, I am ready to grant them, notwithstanding the injuries I have sustained; for the arms of my king, like the lightning of heaven, fall only where they find resistance, and are always more ready to obey the dictates of humanity than the impulses of revenge.”—With this message Cortez dismissed the prisoners under an escort, filled with gratitude, and promising to acquaint their prince with his overtures; but they never returned with an answer. Nor did the general expect any: he was too well acquainted with the haughty spirit of Guatimozin to think that he would accept the terms he proposed, and his own purpose was fully answered by making the proposal in presence of his allies*.”

The brigantines were now the only preparation wanting to enable Cortez to lay close siege to Mexico, and about this time, to his unspeakable satisfaction, he received

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 13.

intelligence from Martin Lopez, that the materials for constructing them were completely finished, and would be conveyed, with all speed, to the frontiers of Tlascal. For this service, no less singular than important, the republic had provided ten thousand Tamemes; eight thousand to carry the planks, masts, iron-work, and other necessities, and two thousand to relieve those occasionally of their burden: and fifteen thousand warriors, who waited an opportunity to join the army, were appointed to accompany and defend them. With this convoy Lopez began his march, requesting that he might be met by a body of Spaniards at Gualipar, not thinking it advisable to attempt a passage through the Mexican territories with Tlascalans only; and Cortez, no less sensible of the propriety of such a guard, instantly dispatched Sandoval with two hundred Spanish foot, fifteen horse, and two field-pieces, to join the forces of the republic, that they might be able to resist all the attacks of the enemy. This junction was happily effected; and Sandoval had the honour of conducting safely to Tezeuco, a convoy on which depended the fate of Mexico*.

Lopez and his workmen immediately applied themselves with the utmost diligence, to the constructing of the vessels from the materials which they had already prepared; but Cortez understanding, that it would be at least twenty days before they could be fit for service, resolved to employ that interval in viewing personally the country about the lake, that he might know what posts were fit to be seized, in order to prevent succours from being conveyed to Mexico, as well as to take advantage of such opportunities as should offer, during his march, to distress the enemy. This design he communicated to his officers, and finding it unanimously approved of, he instantly took measures for carrying it into execution; leaving Sandoval, who was daily rising in the general's confidence, and in the esteem of the whole army, governor of Tezeuco, with particular orders to forward the building of the brigantines, by lending all necessary assistance to Lopez.

It was thought proper to begin this expedition with an attack upon Yaltocan, a town five leagues distant from Tezeuco, situated upon one of the little lakes which discharge themselves into the great one. The inhabitants of this place had returned an insolent answer to proposals of peace which were made them by Cortez, and wounded his messengers; he therefore resolved to chastise them, that their punishment might make the neighbouring nations more respectful. He took with him two hundred and fifty Spanish foot, twenty horse, and twenty thousand Tlascalans. After marching about four leagues, he discovered a numerous army of Mexicans drawn up in order of battle, at some distance from the place threatened. Orders were given to attack them, and executed with so much alacrity, that they were suddenly broken and driven off the field. The assault upon the town was deferred till next morning; when it was carried, after a vigorous resistance, and pillaged and burnt. Cortez continued his march, and halted that night at Colbatilan, a considerable town, which he found entirely deserted by the inhabitants. The large towns of Tenayuca and

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 14.

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Escapuzalco, both upon the great lake, were also forsaken by the citizens. The army lodged a night in each of them, and Cortez took notice of the distance, and whatever else might be of use to his principal design, without suffering any damage to be done to the buildings, that it might not be said he executed vengeance without provocation.

Tacuba, the third city in the empire, was distant from the last of these towns only about half a league. It was situated on the extremity of the great causeway, where the Spaniards had formerly suffered so much, and was a place of great importance, being the nearest to Mexico of all the towns upon the lake, and the key of that capital on the west. Cortez therefore resolved to view it accurately, but without any intention of possessing himself at present of a post so distant from Tezeuco, his head quarters. He accordingly advanced in good order towards the walls; and on his approach, he discovered a large army drawn up in order of battle. This army was composed of a Mexican detachment appointed to observe the motions of the Spaniards in their march, and another body sent to assist the garrison of Tacuba. The Mexicans charged with fury, accompanied with loud cries of defiance; but they were soon broken by a fortunate discharge of the fire-arms, seconded by an impetuous movement of the cavalry. They rallied however unexpectedly, and disputed the victory with obstinacy against Cortez and his whole army. At last they were obliged to take refuge in the city, and the confederates remained masters of the field, where they passed the night unmolested; but no sooner did morning appear than the enemy were seen advancing, as if with an intention of redeeming the honour lost the preceding day. They were again defeated, and chased into the city with a facility that made Cortez suspect some stratagem; he therefore retreated to his former station, where he continued five days, every one of which was distinguished by some sharp engagement.

The general's intention was to waste the garrison in sallies; and finding, by the abatement of their ardour, and the faintness of their efforts, that their numbers were greatly diminished, he resolved to attack them in his turn. Orders were given for this purpose, and every thing was disposed for the assault, when Cortez observed a body of Mexicans advancing along the causeway. It was necessary to defeat this detachment before he could execute his designs against the town, or venture to retreat with safety; he therefore resolved to engage them before they could join the garrison, leaving part of his army to carry on the siege. The Mexicans fled at the first charge, retiring in seeming confusion, in order to draw the Spaniards upon the causeway; and the general, deceived by the stratagem, though not the first of the kind that had been practised upon him, pursued without suspicion. No sooner did the enemy perceive Cortez and his troops within the lake, than they suddenly faced about, and endeavoured to keep him in play by their resistance, while a number of canoes sallied out of Mexico, and invested both sides of the causeway, so that the Spaniards were at once exposed to three attacks. Courage alone could now extricate them; and Cortez, with sword in hand, exposed himself to the greatest dangers, performing such feats of valour as

astonished

astonished both the Spaniards and Tlascalans, and effected a retreat with such gallantry as in some measure repaired the error he had committed. But it was thought advisable to continue the siege of Tacuba*.

When Cortez returned to Tezeuco, after this unpropitious expedition, he found himself reinforced with two hundred Spanish soldiers, eighty horses, two battering cannon, and a considerable supply of ammunition and arms, which had been transported to Villa Rica in four ships from Hispaniola. About the same time messengers arrived from Chalco and Themanelco with advice that the Mexicans had renewed their hostilities against the frontier provinces. Guatimozin, whose mind was continually bent upon the destruction of the Spaniards, sensible that nothing would distress them more than cutting off their communication with Tlascala and Villa Rica, had provided a powerful army for that purpose. This was a matter of so much consequence to Cortez, that he found himself under the necessity of supporting, at all hazards, those allies to whose fidelity he owed the preservation of that essential communication. He therefore dispatched Sandoval with three hundred Spaniards, and a large body of Tlascalans to the assistance of the Chalquele.

Sandoval marched with all convenient speed, and on his arrival, he found the people whom he was sent to succour in arms against the enemy. The Mexicans, who were still superior to the confederates in numbers, possessed themselves of some hollow ways, in order to bring on an engagement, in a place where the Spanish cavalry could not act. It was necessary to dislodge them from this post; and Sandoval entered upon the attack with so much intrepidity, that he fully accomplished his design, though not without considerable loss. The loss on the side of the Mexicans was still greater; but, confiding in their numbers, they renewed the engagement in the plain, where the confederates, now fighting upon equal terms, obtained a complete victory, after a violent conflict, in which the enemy behaved with great gallantry, and displayed a fury bordering upon desperation.

The same evening Sandoval advanced to Guastepeque, where he hoped his fatigued troops might be able to rest securely; but scarce had they laid aside their arms, when the scouts brought advice, that a fresh army of Mexicans, amounting to fifteen thousand men, was advancing to attack them. Resolution was the only remedy. Sandoval animated his men, and then led them against the enemy, whose front being put in disorder by the fire-arms and cross-bows, an opportunity was afforded the cavalry to charge without danger. The shock was irresistible: the Mexicans were completely broken; and the Tlascalans at the same time falling upon the flanks, they fled precipitately towards Guastepeque, where they hoped to find shelter, but the confederates entering the town with them, divided themselves into several bodies, scoured all the streets, and drove the enemy again into the open fields, pursuing them with great slaughter.

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 15,

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This victory was followed by the reduction of Capistlan, a strong town, seated on a rocky eminence, abrupt on one side, and secured on the other by a deep and rapid river. It was distant about two leagues from Guateteque, whither the routed Mexicans crowded, as to an impregnable fortress. Nothing, however, could withstand the valour of the confederates, now flushed with success. Sandoval resolved to drive the enemy from this post, that he might free the frontier provinces from the fear of new invasions, which could easily be effected from so convenient a rendezvous; and perceiving there were only three ways by which he could make the attack, and all of them difficult, he ordered the Tlascalans and Chalquefe to advance in front, as more accustomed to such steep and rugged passes. They obeyed, but so reluctantly, that Sandoval, impatient of delay, rushed forward with his Spaniards to the assault; a circumstance which so animated the Indians, that they forgot the difficulty of the attempt, and seemed emulous who should first gain the brow of the eminence. In many places the path was so steep that they were altogether employed in conquering the ascent; it being impossible to use their hands either in defence or attack, without running the hazard of tumbling to the bottom: the Mexicans all the while rolling down great stones, and showering darts and arrows upon them. At length they gained the summit, under a discharge of the fire-arms, which drove back the enemy, and enabled the confederates to form. They now attacked with incredible valour, as if determined to revenge the difficulties and dangers they had encountered: they forced their way through all opposition; drove the Mexicans into the town; and pursued them so closely that, being unable to rally, they entered the place with them, gained possession without farther resistance, and forced the enemy to the brink of the precipice, where all who did not throw themselves over were put to the sword*.

The slaughter of the Mexicans, on this occasion, is said to have been so great, that some Spaniards who ran to the river, in order to quench their thirst, were obliged to refrain from drinking, or to indulge with horror, its waters being tinged with blood†. The victory, in a word, was decisive; and Sandoval thinking he had now sufficiently deterred the Mexicans from any farther attempts in that quarter, returned to Tezeuco. But scarce was he arrived there, when Cortez received advice, that Quatemozin, still anxious to cut off the communication with Tlascala, had sent a new army into the province of Chalco, as soon as he was informed of the departure of the Spaniards. From the uneasiness occasioned by this intelligence, the general was, however, fortunately soon relieved: the Chalquefe sensible, that they had now no dependance but upon their own valour, suddenly assembled in arms, defeated the Mexicans, after an obstinate and bloody engagement, and drove them out of their territory; an event which occasioned much joy at Tezeuco, as it thence appeared that the frontier provinces were now in a condition to defend themselves.

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 16.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 2.

As the brigantines were not yet finished, Cortez resolved to examine in person the situation of Suchimilco, a town situated upon the great lake, and which communicated with Mexico by a broad causeway that joined the principal ones which led to that capital. He accordingly set out at the head of three hundred Spaniards, and some thousands of confederate Indians, leaving the rest of the army at Tezeuco under the command of Sandoval; and he marched with such diligence, that he arrived the same night at Chalco, where he found the inhabitants arming, in order to oppose a new body of Mexicans, sent to invade their province. This seasonable succour was received with the highest demonstrations of joy by the Chalquesé, who entertained no doubt about victory, when commanded by the Spanish general. They desired to be led immediately against the enemy, ambitious of distinguishing their courage before so perfect a judge of military merit; but of this opportunity they were disappointed: the Mexicans, on receiving advice of the arrival of the Spaniards, had separated themselves into small parties, and taken possession of certain fortresses, situated in the mountains round the frontier. Thence Cortez resolved to dislodge them, but the attempt was found impracticable; and after many fruitless efforts, and considerable loss, he was obliged to retire to Quastepeque in order to refresh his army.

The Spaniards were lodged at Guastepeque in the cazique's palace, which was scarce inferior in extent or magnificence to the imperial residence. Here Cortez learned, that the enemy had abandoned the fortresses on the mountains, and were assembled at Quanovac, a populous and strong town, where they determined to make an obstinate resistance against all the power of the confederates. He advanced towards the place, which was defended by a deep and wide ditch filled with water, which tumbled down rapidly from the adjacent mountains. The Mexicans had cut down the bridges, and placed such a number of men on the opposite bank, that the passage seemed altogether impracticable to the greater part of the confederates, both Spaniards and Indians; but Cortez did not despair of being able to effect it. With this view, he drew up his army at a little distance, ordering the musketeers to keep up a perpetual fire, while he went in person to view the ditch; and having discovered a place much narrower than the common width, he directed two bridges to be hastily constructed and thrown over, by which means the infantry were enabled to pass, the fire-arms and cross-bows keeping the enemy at a distance. The van-guard, composed chiefly of Spaniards, no sooner reached the opposite side, than they formed into a square battalion, which seemed to bid defiance to all opposition: but the Mexicans, now sensible that they ought to have disputed the passage more vigorously, poured down in such multitudes, that the Spaniards could hardly maintain their ground, though they were continually receiving supplies from the troops that were filing over the bridges with all possible expedition; and the event would have been very doubtful, had not Cortez fortunately found a passage for the cavalry, with which he charged the enemy in the rear. Distracted by this double attack, the Mexicans fled with precipitation to the mountains, leaving Quanavac at the mercy of the conquerors.

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In this place, which was saved from the fury of the soldiers at the intercession of the cazique and the principal inhabitants, Cortez passed the night, and early next morning set out for Suchimilco, the chief object of his expedition. The march was difficult and fatiguing, the soldiers being ready to perish with thirst in a long, barren, sandy desile, where they were exposed to the reflected beams of the mid-day sun. Night however brought relief, and a comfortable supply of provisions, in a village recently abandoned by the enemy. At break of day Cortez drew up his army in order of battle, and continued his march with all possible precaution, conjecturing that the enemy would make the most vigorous efforts in defence of a place of such importance as Suchimilco. Nor was he mistaken. The Mexicans had extended their numerous battalions in a plain, at some distance from the city, having in front a deep and rapid river, which discharged itself into the lake. They had doubled their lines on the banks of this river, and disposed their main body for the defence of a wooden bridge, which they had left standing, after barricading it with planks and fascines; believing, that though this fortification should be forced, they would still be able to cut off their enemies, by means of the narrowness of the pass.

Cortez perceived the difficulty, but without seeming to regard it, extended his front along the opposite bank of the river, and ordered the Spaniards to advance, and attack the bridge; a service which they performed with great gallantry, though they met with the most vigorous opposition. Three times were they repulsed, and as often renewed the charge with ardour: at last they gained the pass; on which success the Mexicans every where gave way, their commanders ordering a retreat, that they might be in a condition to rally. They accordingly made a second stand under the walls of the town, and were again attacked so impetuously by the confederates, that they were obliged to fly for shelter to the city. Great numbers were killed as they crowded in at the gates, and Cortez commanded the works which they had erected for the defence of the streets to be forced. Here it was that the general, transported by his impetuous courage, engaged himself so far with the enemy, that, after being fatigued with fighting, having his horse killed under him, and all endeavours to rejoin his troops proving ineffectual, he was in a manner made prisoner by the enemy. Nothing could have saved him, but the desire which the Mexicans had to take him alive as a present for the emperor. His distress was observed by Christoval de Olea, a Spanish soldier, who forced his way through the thickest of the enemy, killed with his own hand those who pressed upon his general, and restored him to liberty. As soon as Cortez rejoined his troops, he pushed the Mexicans with so much vigour, that they fled to that part of the city which stood in the water, leaving the Spaniards masters of all the streets upon the firm land*.

When Cortez entered Suchimilco, he left part of his army without the walls, in order to secure a retreat, and repel any attacks that might be made from abroad. This body of reserve, which was commanded by Olid and Alvarado,

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 17, 18.

found sufficient employment while the general was forcing his way into the city. A band of Mexican nobles made an extraordinary effort to reinforce the garrison of this place, whose conservation the emperor Guatimozin had very much at heart. They landed with ten thousand chosen men; and knowing that Cortez was engaged in the streets, intended to fall upon the rear of the confederates. Astonished to find an army without the walls, where they expected no resistance, the Mexicans stood for some moments in suspense, as if deliberating whether they should attempt to execute the service on which they came; then rushing on with impetuosity, they bravely attempted to cut their way into the town. The attack was obstinate and bloody; but the confederates received them with so much resolution, that they were at last obliged to retreat to their canoes, leaving many of their number dead upon the field. Oñid and Alverado were both wounded, with several other Spaniards and Tlascalans of eminence.

This second advantage rendered Cortez perfectly secure on the side of the land, and being now master of the principal streets, he took possession of a temple, which from its height commanded a view of the whole city and lake. Here he placed a garrison, with orders to keep a constant watch, and to observe the motions of the enemy, both by land and water. The utility of this precaution was soon experienced. Towards the close of the evening two thousand armed canoes were seen advancing with all the speed they could make. The guards were immediately doubled, and every measure was taken to give the enemy a suitable reception, and provide against the dangers of the night. In the morning the Mexicans landed at a considerable distance from the city. Cortez marched against them with the bulk of the confederate army; and the enemy, who were fifteen thousand strong, did not decline the combat: but the resistance which they made was so feeble, and their flight so sudden, that the action rather deserves the name of a rout than a victory*. In Suchimilco the general stayed four days for the recovery of the wounded; after which he returned to the head quarters, the purpose of the expedition being now fully answered.

When Cortez arrived at Tezeuco he found the brigantines completed, and the canal sufficiently enlarged to facilitate their conveyance to the lake. All other necessary preparations for the siege were carried on with vigour: great quantities of arms were made for the Indians; an exact account was taken of the stores in the magazine; the artillery was proved; and a day was fixed for the launching of the vessels, when the auxiliary caziques were ordered to appear at the general rendezvous with their troops. But while Cortez was thus bringing his schemes to a crisis, and looking forward with a steady eye to the fall of the Mexican empire, which seemed now neither uncertain nor remote, a conspiracy was ripening that threatened at once to terminate his life and hopes. The followers of Narvaez had never perfectly united with the original companions of Cortez, nor did they enter into his measures with the same honest zeal. On every occasion that required an extraordinary exertion of courage or

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 18.

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patience, their spirits were apt to sink : the expeditions against the towns in the neighbourhood of the lake, though generally successful, had been accompanied with such incredible hardships, as shook the resolution even of those among them who had adhered to Cortez when he was deserted by their associates ; and now, on nearer view of what they had to encounter, in attempting to reduce Mexico itself, their fears entirely predominated, and they began to deliberate how they might provide for their own safety, as their commander seemed rashly determined to sacrifice their lives to a blind ambition.

Antonio Villafana, a private soldier, artfully fomented this growing spirit of disaffection, to which fear had originally given birth. His quarters became the rendezvous of the malcontents ; where, after various consultations, in which they could find no probable means of checking the career of Cortez, or of escaping from an enterprise which they deemed pregnant with ruin, it was resolved, at the instigation of Villafana, to assassinate the general and his principal officers, and to confer the command upon some person who would relinquish his wild plans, and adopt measures more consistent with their common security. Despair inspired them with courage ; and the manner of perpetrating the crime was immediately settled, after all present had set their names to a writing, whereby they obliged themselves to support Villafana in his attempt upon the life of Cortez. They agreed to feign a packet from Villa Rica, with letters from Spain, and to give it to the general when at table with his friends, the conspirators all rushing in together, under pretence of hearing the news ; and while Cortez was employed in opening the packet, that they should make use of the opportunity afforded by that moment of anxious suspense to murder him and his favourite officers with their poniards. The principal persons marked out for destruction besides the general, were Sandoval, Olid, and Alverado ; and they intended to chuse for their commander Francisco Verdugo, brother-in-law to Velasquez, as they thought he would be most easily brought over, and the most proper person to give credit to their party. But as they knew him to be a man of honour, they durst not acquaint him with their design till the crime should be committed, when they concluded he would be induced to accept of the command, in order to prevent greater evils.

Such was the scheme concerted for the destruction of Cortez and those who stood highest in his confidence ; and the very day, and even the hour for putting it in execution was fixed. But many men may be brought to consent to such atrocious deeds, whose nature shrinks from the perpetration of them. One of Cortez's ancient followers had been drawn into the conspiracy ; but ruminating on his own treachery, and struck with horror at the thought of being instrumental in shedding the blood of a man whom he had so long been accustomed to honour and revere, he went privately to the general, and after begging his life, revealed all that he knew. The occasion admitted of no delay, and very little deliberation ; and happily Cortez at once discerned what conduct was proper in a situation so critical. He immediately went to secure Villafana, attended by the two alcades, and some other officers whom he could trust, and found him in his

quarters, with three or four of his accomplices. The astonishment and confusion of the traitor at this unexpected visit sufficiently betrayed his guilt. After he was seized and put into irons, Cortez ordered every one to retire, under pretence of examining him in private; when, taking advantage of the information he had received, he snatched from his bosom the paper containing the association signed by the conspirators. Impatient to know how far the defection extended, he read it, and found there the names of some persons whose insideliety filled him with sorrow and surprise; but concealing this circumstance from his friends, he caused the soldiers found with Villafana to be confined in a separate apartment, and then withdrew, leaving instructions with the officers of justice to proceed to his trial with all possible speed, without taking any notice of his accomplices. As the proofs of his guilt were manifest, Villafana confessed his crime, was instantly condemned to suffer death, and next morning was seen hanging at the window of his quarters.

Cortez was equally afflicted and enraged at the long list of soldiers, (said to have amounted to three hundred,) concerned in this conspiracy; but he had no sooner leisure for reflection than he was sensible, that neither justice nor resentment could be satisfied at the expence of so many lives, which were invaluable in the present conjuncture. He could not execute such a number of Spaniards, without relinquishing his designs upon Mexico: he therefore had recourse to an expedient, in order to appease justice, and to avoid punishing the guilty, without seeming to connive at the crime, or to be afraid of exerting his authority. It was insinuated that Villafana had torn and swallowed a paper supposed to contain the names of the conspirators, and that the severest tortures had not been able to make him discover one of his accomplices. As soon as this report had time to spread, Cortez called together his troops, and explained to them the atrocious purpose of Villafana, as well as the justice of his punishment; adding, that he was happily ignorant of all the circumstances of this dark transaction, and wished to remain so, the traitor having suddenly destroyed a paper which probably contained an account of it; that he only desired to be informed of any complaints which his soldiers might have against his proceedings, that he might endeavour to correct his faults, and be enabled to yield general satisfaction. This artful declaration, and the composed manner in which it was delivered, restored tranquillity to many a breast that was throbbing, when he began to speak, with consciousness of guilt and dread of detection; and as a farther proof of his sincerity, he ordered the soldiers, who had been found in company with Villafana, to be set at liberty, under pretence that no evidence appeared against them.

By these spirited and prudent measures Cortez suppressed a dangerous faction, reconciled the minds of his soldiers, and defeated a design upon his own life, by sacrificing only the chief instrument and first mover of the conspiracy. He had the advantage of being able to keep a watchful eye on such of his followers as were disaffected, while they, rejoicing that their past guilt was undiscovered, served him with extraordinary zeal and activity, in order to avert those suspicions which they were

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conscious they had merited. Nor were these the only advantages that Cortez derived from the fortunate suppression of this conspiracy. He made use of the opportunity which it afforded him to strengthen his authority, under colour of personal safety, by appointing a body guard of twelve trusty soldiers, commanded by an officer in whom he could confide *.

This disorder among the Spaniards was followed by another among the Tlascalans. Xicotencal, general of the republic, either from some fresh disgust, or because he had not yet laid aside his ancient animosity, and judged this a proper season to distress his rival, withdrew privately from Tezeuco, with a body of men whom he had engaged in his interest. Cortez was informed of his retreat by the Tlascalans themselves, few of whom approved his conduct. The defection of a commander, so considerable among the confederate Indians, was of the most alarming consequence, at a crisis when the greatest unanimity was necessary to give success to the designs of Cortez. Some noble Indians were dispatched after him, in order to persuade him to return. But this expedient proved fruitless. Xicotencal not only rejected their arguments, but dismissed them with a contemptuous answer; a circumstance which so much enraged Cortez, that he immediately sent a party of Spaniards and Chalquese to take him prisoner, or to kill him, if he resisted. The latter part of the instructions was put in execution: Xicotencal fought obstinately, and was slain. His troops, who had followed him contrary to their own inclination, made but a feeble resistance, and returned with the Spaniards to the army, leaving their commander hanging on a tree †.

Having thus fortunately struggled through two dangerous factions, and removed all obstructions to his main design, Cortez ordered the brigantines to be launched, in presence of all the Spanish troops, as well as of the auxiliary Indians, who were drawn up on the banks of the canal. Father Olmedo blessed them as they passed, and gave each its name, according to the custom of mariners; and every eye followed them, with wonder and hope, till they entered the lake, when they hoisted their sails, let fly their colours, and bore away before the wind, while the music played, and the guns were fired, which were answered from the shore by a general shout of joy, and *Te Deum* was sung for the happy success ‡. It was indeed a matter of no small astonishment in an age so little improved, that thirteen vessels of such a size as to deserve the name of ships, should be constructed in a country which furnished no material for them except wood, carried sixty miles over land on men's shoulders, and completed in such a manner as to answer all the purposes of navigation.

Cortez now reviewed his Spanish troops, which consisted of eighty-six horsemen, and eight hundred and fourteen foot soldiers; of whom near two hundred were armed with muskets or cross-bows, the rest with sword, buckler, and lance. The train of artillery was composed of three battering-cannon, and fifteen field-pieces.

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 19. Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 1.
lib. iv. c. 19.

† De Solis,
‡ Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 2. De Solis, lib. v. c. 20.

On board each of the brigantines he put one of his small cannon, twenty-five Spaniards, and twelve Indian rowers, under the command of a captain. Things being thus disposed, he determined to attack Mexico from three different quarters; from Iztacpalapa on the east side of the lake, from Tacuba on the west, and Cuyocan towards the south, those towns being situated on the principal causeways that led to the capital, and intended for its defence. He appointed Sandoval to command in the first, Alvarado in the second, and Olid in the third; allotting to each one hundred and fifty Spaniards, and a large body of confederate Indians. He took upon himself the conduct of the brigantines, which commanded the lake, that he might oversee every thing, and carry relief where it should be most wanted*.

Alvarado and Olid marched in company to Tacuba, which they found entirely deserted by the inhabitants; the greater part of whom were gone to the defence of Mexico, where Guatimozin had collected the chief force of his empire, and the rest had retired to the mountains of Chapultepec, in order to protect the aqueducts which came from thence, and supplied that city with fresh water. As it was of the utmost consequence to preserve these conveyances, the emperor had ordered an army for the defence of each aqueduct, as soon as he was informed that Cortez had resolved upon the siege of his capital. The two Spanish captains led their troops against the enemy, defeated them after a warm engagement, and then broke down the aqueducts, suffering the water to take its natural course into the lake. This was the first step towards the siege of Mexico; and it was important, as it reduced the inhabitants to great inconveniency and distress, by obliging them to seek for fresh water at a distance, in the brooks that ran from the mountains, and occupied a number of hands that might otherwise have been employed in repelling the attacks of the enemy.

This service being performed, Olid and Alvarado took possession of their respective stations without opposition, and Cortez was proceeding with his fleet of brigantines to assist Sandoval in dislodging the enemy from that part of the city of Iztacpalapa which stood in the water, when he observed a multitude of canoes coming out of Mexico, and advancing towards him. These being joined by others from the neighbouring towns, to the amount, as was supposed of four thousand, seemed to cover the whole face of the lake, and afforded a spectacle both beautiful and terrible. This powerful fleet had been provided by Guatimozin, in order to attempt the destruction of the brigantines, the fatal effects of whose operations he foresaw and dreaded. Cortez was glad of an opportunity of manifesting his superiority on the watery element, and shewing himself lord of the lake; especially as he perceived, by the crowds of people who filled the windows and balconies, that the whole city of Mexico was held in anxious suspense on the issue of the dispute. He drew up his brigantines in the form of a crescent, that he might extend his front, and engage with freedom. In this order he advanced slowly towards the enemy, that his rowers being re-

May 10.

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 20.

refreshed by lying on their oars, might break in with greater vigour upon the canoes, when they came within a proper distance; it being such a dead calm at the time that no dependance could be placed in the sails. The Mexicans advanced boldly to the charge; and fortunately for Cortez, when they drew near, a breeze sprung up: in a moment the sails were spread, and the brigantines bore down with such impetuosity, that they broke and overturned every thing before them, while the artillery, fire-arms, and cross-bows, made dreadful slaughter of the enemy. The nobles of Mexico, who commanded five hundred stout canoes, still made some resistance, but the rest was all disorder and confusion; the canoes running foul of and oversetting one another, in order to avoid being shattered by the brigantines, or sunk by the artillery. The Mexicans in a word suffered a complete defeat; some hundreds of their canoes being destroyed, and several thousands of their people slain by the arms, or drowned by the irresistible shock of the vessels of the Spaniards, who thus acquired the reputation of being invincible on this new element, and the brigantines henceforth rode triumphant on the lake, insulting the city of Mexico with impunity*.

The night after this victory Cortez passed at a station near Tezeuco, and was preparing next morning to sail for Iztacpalapa, in order to assist Sandoval, according to his former resolution, when he discovered a fleet of canoes making all possible dispatch towards Cuyocan, and thought Olid might stand in more immediate need of succour. In this conjecture he was not deceived: he found that officer engaging the enemy on the causeway, and obliged to make head against those who defended it, as well as to resist the canoes that attacked him on each side. Olid was on the point of retreating when the brigantines came up to his relief; and the difficulties with which he had to struggle were indeed insuperable, while exposed to so many different attacks. The Mexicans had drawn up the bridges over those chasms towards the city, by which the waters of the higher lake discharged themselves into the lower. At each chasm they had fixed planks, in such a manner, that they could annoy the Spaniards under cover; and in case they should be forced to retreat, they had raised farther obstructions by trenches dug behind, and filled with water, over which were laid loose planks, that could easily be removed, after they had retired.

In this manner were the three causeways fortified, and such were the difficulties that Olid was endeavouring to surmount when Cortez arrived. He had already made himself master of the first bridge, from which he drove the enemy by his fire-arms; then filled it up with fascines, over which the troops passed, in order to attack the second. The fleet of canoes had put him to a stand; but they were soon thrown into confusion by the brigantines, which likewise played their artillery so briskly upon those who defended the trenches, that the Mexicans fled in disorder to the last chasm towards the city. Night prevented the confederates from taking advantage of the terror and confusion of the enemy, in order to make themselves masters of this pass; but they maintained the ground

* De Solís, lib. v. c. 20. Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 4.

which they had gained, and early next morning advanced to the attack, when they found the rampart so strongly fortified, and defended by such a multitude of people, that the attempt to force it seemed hazardous, if not impracticable. A retreat, however, was deemed disgraceful, as well as inpolitic, unless in the last necessity, after they were engaged. A brisk fire was therefore kept up from the brigantines, while Olid was employed in filling up the chasm, and destroying the fortifications on the causeway. This service being performed, he charged the Mexicans who defended the works, making room for the auxiliary Indians under his command to advance. The enemy at the same time were supported by troops from the city, and made a vigorous resistance: but they at last began to give way; when Cortez, incensed at their obstinacy, landed at the head of thirty Spaniards, and infused such spirits into the troops, that they drove the enemy before them into the city, gained the principal street, and forced a strong temple, filled with armed men, without a single repulse. The whole quarter in which that temple stood was immediately deserted by the enemy; and Cortez was so well satisfied with having got footing once more in the capital, that he had thoughts of maintaining a garrison there, and even of advancing the quarters thither from Cuyocan. But he relinquished this design by the advice of his officers, who represented the danger to which his troops would be exposed, from the incessant attacks of the Mexicans, and the difficulty of supplying them with provisions; that they ought to make their advances, equally from each of the three stations, in order to divide the enemy's forces, until all had carried their approaches into the city, and drawn so near, that they could be mutually assisting to each other*.

In consequence of this advice, Cortez, with his fleet of brigantines, escorted Olid and his troops back to Cuyocan, in order to keep off the canoes, and thence proceeded to Iztacpalapa, where he found Sandoval reduced to the last extremity. This brave officer had possessed himself of the buildings on the land, and lodged his troops there, fortifying his quarters in the best manner possible; but the enemy, who retired to that part of the city which stood in the water, continued to annoy him from their canoes. He made great havoc among such as stood his approach, and had vanquished three reinforcements from Mexico, that came to attack him by land. At length he resolved to make himself master of the whole city. With this view he seized a large house, in the quarter towards the lake, making a passage through the water with fascines; but scarce had he gained possession of it, when a fleet of canoes, which had lain in ambush, attended by a troop of swimmers, removed the fascines, and cut off his retreat, while a number of Mexican archers plied him from the windows and terraces of the neighbouring houses. In this situation Cortez found him, and played the artillery of his brigantines so successfully upon the canoes, that they retired in the utmost confusion into the canals leading through the city to the lake. Many of them were sunk by the crowding in of people from the terraces, and

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 21.

not a few were destroyed by the brigantines, in endeavouring to avoid that danger. The Spaniards made some prisoners, and found a sufficient booty to encourage the soldiers.

But Cortez perceived, notwithstanding this advantage, that it would be impossible to use the causeway of Iztacpalapa to advantage, until that part of the city which afforded a retreat for the Mexican canoes was destroyed: and this would occasion such delay as might prove fatal to the other attacks; he therefore resolved to evacuate the post entirely, and send the body of forces under Sandoval to seize upon Tapeaquilla, where there was another causeway, less commodious for attacking by reason of its narrowness, but more advantageous to the design which he had now formed of starving the enemy into submission, if force should prove ineffectual. This resolution was immediately executed: Sandoval marched by land, escorted by the brigantines, till he arrived at his new quarters; of which he took possession without resistance, Tapeaquilla being entirely deserted by the inhabitants.

Cortez now sailed for Tacuba, where he found Alvarado still in possession of that city, which had been abandoned to him, but struggling with the same difficulties that Olid had experienced in advancing along the causeway of Cuyocan. His troops were wasted by constant skirmishes, and his approaches to Mexico were obstructed by breaches and trenches, which the enemy were fortifying every day. Even after the arrival of Cortez, the Spaniards were exposed to the continual persecution of the Mexican canoes, in all quarters where the brigantines were not present to protect them; and it was impossible for thirteen vessels to cover the assailants in three different stations at the same time. Sensible of these disadvantages, Cortez commanded all attacks to cease till farther orders, and employed himself in assembling such a fleet of canoes as should be sufficient to obstruct all convoys to the city, as well as to protect his troops in their approaches. When he had collected the number thought requisite, he divided them into three squadrons, manned by Indians, who knew how to manage them, and commanded by captains of their own nation. These canoes he distributed among the brigantines, which he also divided into squadrons, sending four to Sandoval, four to Alvarado, and joining Olid with the other five, under his own command*.

From this time the Spaniards carried on their attacks with more facility: an entire stop was put to the insults of the Mexican canoes; and as all intercourse with the country was in a manner cut off, the enemy severely felt the scarcity of fresh water, and even began to be straitened in provisions, notwithstanding the stores laid up by the foresight of Guatimozin. In order to remove these obstructions, to resist and annoy the besiegers, the Mexicans employed all their address and ingenuity; and the variety of expedients, to which they had recourse, and which discover both subtilty and military skill, prove that they were by no means such a contemptible enemy as they have been represented by some writers. Perceiving that all their endeavours to fortify the causeways proved

* Id. *ibid.*

ineffectual, they sent by secret and remote passages several canoes full of pioneers, to clear the chafins which the Spaniards had filled up, that they might fall upon them with their whole force when they should be obliged to retire, and take advantage of these unexpected obstructions. This stratagem being detected, though not without some loss, they had recourse to another : they made frequent sallies by night, contrary to their custom, in order to alarm the confederates, and fatigue them by watching, that they might afterwards attack them with fresh troops.

But the scheme which most strongly discovered the industry and ingenuity of the Mexicans, was that formed against the brigantines, whose superior force they dreaded, and endeavoured to overcome by engaging them singly. They built thirty of that sort of large canoes, which the natives called Piraguas, of a greater size than common, and strengthened them with thick planks to receive the shot, and enable the men to engage under shelter. With this fleet they sailed out under night, and took their station behind the reeds in the lake, which grew so high and thick that they formed several groves impenetrable to the sight. In order to draw the brigantines into the ambuscade, they had provided some canoes laden with provisions as a bait ; and they had fixed stakes in the water, in hopes either to wreck the brigantines, or to make it easier to board them.

Next morning two of the brigantines being seen cruising near the place where the Mexicans had taken their station, they sent out their canoes by a remote way, that, being seen at a distance, they might pretend to fly, and take shelter among the reeds. The stratagem succeeded. The Spaniards, who had no suspicion, pursued the flying canoes with all the force of their oars, fell in among the hidden stakes, and were so embarrassed that they could neither retreat nor advance, when they saw the piraguas coming out with desperate fury to fall upon them. A sharp engagement now began. The Spaniards plied their muskets and artillery with all possible diligence, while the chief struggle of the Mexicans was to board the brigantines, in which they were repeatedly foiled. All the valour of the Spanish mariners must, however, have sunk under the weight of numbers, had not the shock of the cannon somewhat disengaged their vessels, which were afterwards cleared from every impediment by some expert swimmers, who removed the stakes by the assistance of hatchets. Being now at full liberty, they made dreadful havock among the enemy ; sunk and destroyed most of the piraguas, and pursued the rest as far as their own security would permit. The victory was complete ; but it was not purchased without loss : the brigantines were much damaged, and the two captains, Barba and Pertillo, fell gallantly defending their vessels*.

Cortez had soon an opportunity of revenging the death of those brave officers. Having received intelligence that the Mexicans had repaired their vessels, and stationed them a second time behind the reeds, in order to draw the Spaniards to an engagement, under the same disadvantages as formerly, he resolved to countermine their plot. Six brigantines were concealed among the reeds, not far from

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 22.

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the place where the paraguas lay. One of these was ordered to cruise about, as if in search of canoes laden with provisions, and afterwards to draw as near the concealed paraguas as was necessary to let them see they were discovered; and when they pursued, she had orders to make all possible haste to the place of the counter ambuscade. Every thing succeeded to the general's most sanguine expectations. The Mexicans gave chase to the brigantine, as a sure prize, and were suddenly saluted by the artillery of the rest of the squadron. All their attempts to retreat were now in vain: the Spaniards poured in their shot with so much fury, that scarce a single paragua escaped being sunk or taken.

These successes, though by no means decisive, served to animate the Spaniards, and to dishearten the Mexicans; who, according to the intelligence received from the city, were now reduced to great want of provisions. It was also reported that the necessities of the common people had rendered them clamorous, and that the nobility were divided in their sentiments relative to the state of affairs. This Cortez considered as a proper opportunity to renew his overtures of peace; for though he had great reason to believe, that he should be able to reduce Mexico by force, he was sensible it must yet cost much blood, and was besides solicitous to preserve so fine a city from destruction, that it might remain as a monument of his glory, and become the capital of his conquests. The proposals, which consisted chiefly in a demand of homage to the king of Spain, were sent by some noble Mexicans, who had been taken prisoners; and it is affirmed that the emperor called a council of his ministers and principal officers, and laid before them the wretched condition of the city; the prodigious diminution of the number of inhabitants; the murmurs of the people; and all the present and future consequences of the siege; after which he asked their opinion relative to the proposals made by Cortez, and expressed his own inclination for peace, as far as was consistent for a prince of a martial genius and invincible courage. All the members of the council were of the same way of thinking: but when the proposition was referred to the priests, they opposed it with the utmost violence, foreseeing the overthrow of their temples, and consequently the ruin of their influence over the minds of the people. They pretended to have received certain answers from their idols, which gave them fresh assurances of victory: and this information so animated the council, that they unanimously declared for the continuance of the war. Guatimozin, who seems only to have affected pacific sentiments, in order to convince the Mexicans how tender he was of their lives and property, and who was probably not unacquainted with the opinion of the priests, or the effect which it was likely to produce on the council, now issued a proclamation, prohibiting any one from mentioning peace, whatever distress the city might be reduced to, under pain of capital punishment*.

Cortez was no sooner informed of this determination, than he resolved to push on his hostilities by the three causeways at the same time, and to carry fire and sword into the very heart of the city. With that view he sent instructions to

* De Solís, lib. v. c. 22.

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Alvarado and Sandoval to advance with their respective divisions to a general assault, while he placed himself at the head of the troops posted on the causeway of Cuyocan, and properly commanded by Christoval de Olid. Animated by the presence of their general, and the expectation of some decisive event, the Spaniards pushed forward with irresistible fury, till they came to the last breach in the causeway, which the Mexicans had enlarged to the extent of sixty feet; and on the opposite bank they had raised a fortification of timbers, strongly united, and covered with planks, in which were several artificial openings, through which they could ply their darts and arrows, under cover. This fortification was garrisoned by a body of select troops; but it was insufficient to withstand the force of the artillery, which were no sooner brought to bear than it was broken in pieces, the Mexicans who defended it retiring with threatening gestures into the city.

Having thus cleared the pass, the next care of Cortez was to transport over his troops, by the assistance of the canoes and brigantines; and while he advanced against the enemy, who were still posted behind the trenches cut across the streets, he ordered Julian de Alderete, a captain of chief note in the reinforcement brought from Hispaniola, to fill up and secure the gaps in the causeway. But that officer, deeming it inglorious to be thus employed, while his companions were in the heat of action and the career of victory, no sooner heard the noise of the battle, than he left the important charge committed to him to the care of another of his company, who likewise slighted it; and all hurried on inconsiderately to mingle with the combatants; so that this pass, which had been looked upon as impracticable at the time of the attack, now remained entirely abandoned to the enemy.

The Mexicans obstinately stood the first charge; and it cost Cortez no small trouble, and some blood, to force them from their trenches. The hazard of the Spaniards was yet greater, when they had passed the ruined buildings, and were obliged to defend themselves against the arrows and darts of the enemy, which came pouring upon them from the windows and tops of the houses; but in the very middle of the engagement, there appeared a sudden slackness in the enemy, which seemed to be the effect of some new instructions, as they hastily quitted the ground which they had gallantly defended, without being broken. This conjecture was not ill founded: Guatimozin having received information, that the great breach in the causeway was left open and unguarded, instantly dispatched a large body of chosen warriors to take possession of it, and at the same time commanded the troops posted in the front of the Mexican army to slacken their efforts, in order to allure the Spaniards to push forward, in hopes of snatching a complete victory.

Cortez, who suspected some stratagem, and had now no more than time to return to his quarters, ordered a retreat. But scarce had the Spaniards begun to march, when their ears were struck with the awful sound of the *Sacred Trumpet*!—so called, because none but the priests were permitted to blow it, and they only on the most solemn and trying occasions, when they denounced hostilities, or

animated:

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animated the people in defence of their gods. It was consecrated to the God of War; and on a signal given by Guatimozin, its loud and doleful notes broke from the bosom of the great temple. The Mexicans, as if roused by a voice from heaven, no sooner heard the awakening call, than they rushed upon their enemies with frantic rage, accompanied with frightful shouts, and an enthusiastic contempt of death. The Spaniards were unable to resist the immense multitude that pressed upon them, impelled at once by religious fury and the assurance of success. In vain did Cortez endeavour to give a check to the pursuit by a general discharge of the fire arms and cross-bows: their execution was not perceived among the incredible numbers of the enemy; and when he was attempting to make a stand with the cavalry, information was brought of the fatal gap, which obstructed his retreat. Now was the time for a vigorous resistance; but such was the terror and confusion occasioned by this intelligence, that the general's voice was not heard: Spaniards and Tlascalans, horse and foot, fled with precipitation, and plunged promiscuously into the breach in the causeway, while the Mexicans in their light canoes rushed upon them fiercely from every side, through shoals which the brigantines durst not approach, and either killed, drowned, or took prisoners the greater part of them. Cortez, with the few Spaniards who still stood by him, endeavoured to keep off the enemy, and the slaughter which he made was terrible; but all his efforts proved ineffectual: his horse was killed under him; he received several wounds; was in danger of being taken; escaped with difficulty to the brigantines; and returned to Cuyocan disappointed, dejected, and defeated. Forty Spaniards fell alive into the hands of the Mexicans, an enemy never known to shew mercy to a captive; about half that number were slain, with above one thousand Tlascalans*.

Meanwhile Sandoval and Alvarado were not more successful in their respective commands: they gained bridges, filled up breaches in the causeways, forced their way into the city, and destroyed several houses; but they were so vigorously assaulted in their retreat, which both found necessary, that they were obliged to have recourse to flight. Twenty Spaniards were killed or taken, in the two attacks, with a proportional number of confederate Indians; a circumstance which greatly discouraged the troops, especially as the Mexicans, in the present instance, appeared to have been victorious without any accident in their favour.

But the sorrowful reflections of the Spaniards, who escaped in this unfortunate rout, were not confined merely to their own sufferings: new feelings, no less painful, were excited by the barbarous triumph and horrid festival with which the Mexicans celebrated their victory. No sooner did night draw on, than every quarter of the city was illuminated; and the great temple, dedicated to the God of War, shone with such peculiar splendour, that the Spaniards could plainly see the people in motion, and the priests busy in hastening the preparations for the death of the miserable captives. They fancied they discerned their companions by the whiteness of their skins, as they were stript naked, and compelled to dance

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 22. Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 4.

before the image of the god to whom they were to be offered, and whose altar was afterwards sprinkled with the blood of their yet fluttering hearts. They heard the shrieks of those who were sacrificed, and thought they could distinguish each unhappy victim by the well-known sound of his voice. Imagination added to what they heard or saw, and augmented the horror of the dismal spectacle. The most obdurate natures melted into tears of compassion, and the stoutest heart trembled at a scene so affecting and dreadful *.

The part which Cortez had to act on this melancholy occasion was peculiarly distressing, and required an extraordinary exertion of fortitude. Besides his share in common sorrow, he was oppressed with the additional load of anxious reflections natural to a general on such an unexpected calamity, without being permitted to relieve his mind by giving vent to its anguish. He was obliged to assume an air of tranquillity, in order to revive the spirits and hopes of his followers, whose most vigorous efforts were necessary to save them from total ruin. The Mexicans, elated with their victory, sallied out before morning, by the three cauleways, to attack the Spaniards in their quarters; but they did not find an enemy unprepared. Alarmed by the sound of the awful trumpet, which inspired their antagonists with so much fury, and to whose influence their leaders trusted more than to the probability of surprise, the Spaniards were all under arms; and by the assistance of the artillery and the brigantines, the Mexicans were repulsed with great slaughter, at each of the three attacks.

Guatimozin however, disregarding the failure of this attempt, used every effort and artifice to improve his late victory, by weakening the enemy, and inspiring his own people with confidence. He sent the heads of the Spaniards who had been sacrificed to the leading men in the adjacent provinces, that these tokens of his success might confirm them in their obedience, and animate them to the defence of their sovereign against the common enemy; and he assured them, that the God of War, appeased by the blood of their invaders, so plentifully shed on his altars, had declared with an audible voice, that in eight days the Spaniards should be finally destroyed, with all who adhered to their interest.

The effects of this political prediction, which gained universal credit among that superstitious race of men, were as great as the emperor could have wished. The zeal of the provinces that had already declared against the Spaniards was augmented, and the people of several which had hitherto remained inactive, now took arms with enthusiastic ardour to execute the decrees of their supreme god. The threatenings of this terrible divinity were artfully propagated among the Indian auxiliaries who had joined the Spaniards; and they, accustomed to receive his oracles with the same implicit faith as the other Mexican tribes, were so much struck with the precise time limited for the period of their lives, in case they continued in disobedience, that in the space of three nights Cortez found himself almost entirely deserted by his allies. Even the Tlascalans, alarmed at the dreadful denunciation, disbanded in disorder, and left their stations, none remaining

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 23. Castilló, c. 152. Robertson, Hist. America, book v.

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behind but a few of the chiefs, who perhaps laboured under the same apprehensions, but valued their lives less than their honour.

This unexpected desertion, added to his other misfortunes, made Cortez almost despair of the success of his undertaking; but the moment that he was informed of its cause, a ray of hope broke in upon his mind: he determined, for his greater security, to suspend all military operations during the time marked out by the oracle, and to turn the prediction to his own advantage, by exhibiting a striking demonstration of its falsity. With this view he sent messengers after the fugitives, in order to temporize with their fears, while the Spanish troops lay safely under cover of the artillery and brigantines, till the fatal term expired. The expedient succeeded. His allies, ashamed of their credulity, returned to their several stations, animated with fresh vigour and resolution: other tribes, who had hitherto adhered to the emperor, concluding that the gods, having thus deceived the Mexicans, had finally decreed their ruin, now joined the Spaniards; and such was the levity of the natives in general, that, in a short time after this almost total defection, Cortez found himself supported by an army of near two hundred thousand Indians*.

The Mexicans, however, were not idle during this suspension of hostilities to which they had reduced their enemies: they made frequent and desperate sallies; but all their efforts were not sufficient to recover one of the posts of which the Spaniards had taken possession. Hence the city continued blocked up, and the famine was daily increasing. The particulars of that calamity Cortez learned from his prisoners, who gave him to understand, That the people were obliged to drink the brackish water of the lake, which produced a variety of diseases, of which great numbers died; and that the inconsiderable supply of provisions brought by such canoes as escaped the brigantines, being equally divided among the nobles, became an additional subject of impatience and discontent to the populace, whose clamours began to give suspicion of their fidelity. This intelligence was of the utmost importance, and Cortez did not fail to profit by it. He immediately assembled a council of his officers, in order to deliberate on the measures necessary to be pursued at such a juncture; and in that council it was unanimously resolved to renew the three attacks, and to push both the siege and the blockade.

Cortez, however, saw the necessity of adopting a new system of operations. Sensible of the impossibility of carrying Mexico by a single effort, notwithstanding his increase of force, and convinced by fatal experience of the danger of retreating in the face of the enemy, he determined to make his advances gradually, and to maintain the posts that he gained. Water, provisions, and whatever else was requisite for the subsistence of the troops, being accordingly provided, the three captains, Sandoval, Alvarado, and Olid, marched out of their quarters at the head of their respective divisions, each having his brigantines and canoes to support him; Cortez, as formerly, leading the division under Olid. They

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 23. Cortez, Relat. p. 275.

found the three causeways in a posture of defence; the bridges drawn up, and the chafms fortified and guarded by an innumerable multitude of armed men: but the brigantines played their cannon to so much advantage, while the soldiers kept up a constant discharge of fire-arms and cross-bows, that all opposition soon gave way, and the three divisions arrived about the same time in the city, and made good their quarters. This was all their aim for that day: they therefore lodged themselves in the best manner possible; determining next morning to proceed in their attempt to reach the great square of Tlatelulco, which was the centre of their several expectations, and towards which they tended by different lines*.

This new method of proceeding occasioned great trouble and confusion among the Mexicans, and entirely disconcerted all the measures which they had taken for charging the Spaniards in their retreat. The report that the enemy had made good their quarters rapidly spread through the city, and every mind was employed in contriving some resource against the pressing danger. The nobles repaired in a body to the imperial palace, and endeavoured to prevail on Guatimozin to quit the capital, and retire to a place of more security; but their utmost entreaties could only induce him to remove to a more distant quarter of the city, declaring that he was fully determined to share the fate of his people. In consequence of this resolution, the whole remaining force of Mexico was assembled, with a design of expelling the Spaniards by one decisive effort; but no sooner did the Mexicans, who divided themselves into three bodies, come within reach of the artillery planted in all the avenues to the Spanish quarters, than their courage failed them. The cannon made such dreadful slaughter in the van, that it fell back upon the centre, and threw the whole army into confusion. Several attempts were made to rally, but the Spaniards kept up such an incessant fire, that the Mexicans were never able to advance so near as to employ their weapons; so that they were obliged to retire, dispirited and baffled, while the besiegers enlarged their quarters, without the loss of a single man.

The Spaniards, however, had still many difficulties to encounter. For the space of four days they were in continual action, disputing every inch of ground: they were obliged to destroy houses, level works, and fill up the ditches which were dug across every street; and after the toils of the day, they were under the necessity of fortifying quarters for their security during the night. But all these obstacles were gallantly surmounted, and all the three divisions penetrated into the great square, nearly at the same time. Alvarado arrived there first, and found the Mexicans drawn up in order of battle; but he charged them with so much vigour that they were soon broken, and obliged to seek shelter in the neighbouring streets. He had just taken possession of an adjoining temple, from the top of which he made a signal to his friends of his success, when Cortez and Olid arrived with the division under their command, driving before them a multitude of Mexicans; who now being enclosed between the two bodies of the confederates, were so warmly attacked in front and rear, that few of them escaped.

July 27.

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 23, 24.

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No sooner was it known, that the whole force of the Spaniards was united, than the Mexicans ran with precipitation to defend the person of their prince; so that Cortez had an opportunity to lodge his army to the best advantage, and to fortify his quarters for that night, without opposition or interruption. In the morning he drew out his troops with an intention to attack that quarter of the city into which the emperor and his court had retired; and as it was strongly fortified both by nature and art, he expected a vigorous resistance. He therefore judged it advisable, before he began the assault, to renew his overtures of peace, that he might not be exposed to those efforts that are inspired by despair, and which sometimes change victory into defeat. Four noble prisoners were accordingly chosen to carry a message to Guatimozin, acquainting him, that the Spanish general was far from desiring the destruction of so fine a city, and would willingly avoid the further effusion of blood, provided any reasonable terms of accommodation were agreed to, on the part of his imperial majesty*.

Guatimozin was too proud to return any answer to proposals which he considered as insidious; but the Mexican nobility, solicitous to save the life of a monarch whom they adored, amused Cortez with a pretended negotiation for the space of four days, during which they were contriving the emperor's escape, that he might rouse the more distant provinces of his empire to arms, while they maintained the war, or accepted of such conditions as they could obtain from the conquerors. Cortez at last suspected their design, and aware of how much importance it was to defeat it, appointed Sandoval, the officer on whose vigilance he could most perfectly rely, to take the command of the brigantines, with strict injunctions to watch every motion of the enemy. At the same time he approached their fortifications by land, in order to forward the peace by the appearance of war. The Mexicans now endeavoured to amuse him, by promising an interview with the emperor: he listened to them once more; and was again deceived†.

Meanwhile Sandoval had observed many suspicious appearances on the lake. A great number of canoes and piraguas had been assembled for some time in a bay near that quarter of the city where the court now resided. They excited the circumspection of Sandoval; and on the morning that Cortez was to receive his final answer from the Mexican deputies, that attentive and discerning officer perceived at the dawn a great number of people crowding on board these vessels. His suspicions were confirmed. He made towards them with his fleet of brigantines, and was astonished at the gallantry with which they received him: undismayed at the havoc made by the artillery at a distance, they undauntedly advanced to close quarters, and maintained the struggle with obstinacy. But Sandoval was not so much occupied with the contest for victory as to

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 24. Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 5.

† Id. *ibid.*

forget his general instructions : he observed, in the bottom of the bay, six or seven piraguas making the best of their way, with the utmost force of oars, and instantly gave the signal to chase. Garcia Holguin, who commanded the fleetest brigantine, soon overtook them, and was preparing to fire upon the foremost piragua, which seemed to lead and govern the rest ; when the rowers, apprised of his design, at once dropt their oars, and all on board threw down their arms, conjuring him to forbear, as the sacred person of his imperial majesty was in that vessel. Holguin immediately leaped into the piragua, and eagerly seized his prize. Guatimozin advanced to meet him with dignity and composure, betraying no signs either of fear or surprise : “ I am your prisoner,” said he, and ready to go whithersoever you think fit to conduct me. All that I have to desire of you is, that some regard may be had to the honour of the empress, my comfort, and to that of the women who accompany her.” He then passed into the brigantine, giving his hand to the empress to assist her ; and he possessed such perfect presence of mind, that perceiving Holguin in some anxiety about the other piraguas, “ You have no occasion,” added he, “ to give yourself any concern about those men : they are my followers, and will all come to die at the feet of their prince.” Accordingly, on the first signal which he made them, they let the weapons drop out of their hands, and followed the brigantine as prisoners, in obedience to their sovereign’s command *.

Sandoval was still hotly engaged with the fleet of canoes, and by the resistance which he met with, had a striking example of the courage and fidelity of the Mexican nobles, who at the hazard of their own lives had undertaken to secure the liberty of their prince. But no sooner had they notice that he was made captive, than their animating shouts were converted into dolorous lamentations ; and they not only surrendered with little or no opposition, but several of them requested that they might be carried on board the brigantines to share the fate of their emperor.

The same thing happened on shore, where Cortez had renewed his attacks, on finding himself deceived by the Mexican deputies. The defendants, who had hitherto stood their ground with surprising resolution, on being informed of the taking of the piraguas, instantly retired in confusion. The occasion of that sudden change was presently known, and Cortez went to receive his royal prisoner. Guatimozin, when conducted to the general’s quarters, entered first, thereby intimating that he had no reluctance to his confinement. He immediately took his seat ; then seeming to recollect himself, he suddenly rose up, and desired Cortez to sit down. When both had taken their seats, the emperor eyed the Spanish general with an air of majesty, and said, “ I have done what became a sovereign : I have defended my people to the last extremity : nothing now remains but to die. Take that dagger,” pointing to one which Cortez wore, “ plant it in this breast, and put an end to a life which can no longer be of use †.” Cortez endeavoured to comfort him by expatiating on the valour and

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 25.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 5.

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A. D. 1521.

generosity of the Spanish monarch, whose friendship he might hope for, as well as the recovery of his liberty and the throne of his ancestors; and he assured the captive monarch, that, in the meantime, while waiting for their sovereign's instructions, he should be respected by the Spaniards, and attended by them in such a manner, that he should not be able to distinguish their services from those of his own subjects*.

Aug. 13.

Cortez now proposed to complete the reduction of that quarter of the city which was still possessed by the enemy. With this view he took leave of his royal prisoners, whom he committed to the care of Sandoval; but Guatimozin, penetrating his design, desired to speak with him before his departure, and conjured him not to use the people harshly, as their resistance, if any yet remained, proceeded entirely from their ignorance of his condition. He therefore sought leave, which was readily granted him, to inform his subjects of his fate, and of the necessity of conforming themselves to the will of their gods. No sooner did the Mexicans receive this intimation, than they threw down their arms, and submitted to the law of the conqueror; and Cortez took possession of that small part of the capital which had escaped the general destruction†. Thus terminated the siege of Mexico, the most memorable event in the conquest of the New World. It lasted almost three months, and was distinguished by a series of gallant efforts, both on the side of the besiegers and the besieged, worthy to decide the fate of a great empire.

After having shewn that Cortez, according to his own account, was at one time supported by near two hundred thousand auxiliary Indians, and assigned the reasons of their engaging in his cause, it would be impertinent here to remark with a learned historian, that this conquest was not accomplished merely by dint of Spanish valour. But we may justly observe, That if this view of the subject places the achievements of the Spaniards in a less romantic, it sets them in a truer light; while it heightens our admiration of the political and military talents of Cortez, who was able to unite in his favour so many nations, with whose language and manners he was unacquainted; to reconcile their jarring claims and interfering interests; to take advantage of their passions and prejudices; to acquire an ascendancy over their councils; and to over-awe their fierce spirits, in the field, by his authority; to tame them to discipline; and to direct their combined efforts, as if they had been governed by one soul, towards the great object of his ambition.

* De Solis, lib. v. c. 25.

† Id. *ibid.*

C H A P. VII.

The final Subjection of the Mexican Empire, and its Settlement as a Spanish Province.

CHAP. VII.

A. D. 1521.

FULLY persuaded that they should now receive an ample recompense for all their dangers and toils, the joy of the Spaniards on the reduction of Mexico was excessive. But this exultation was suddenly damped by the cruel disappointment of those sanguine hopes, which had animated them during the siege, and which only could have enabled them to struggle with so many hardships. Instead of that immense wealth of which they expected to become masters, by the pillage of the temples, and the distribution of the treasures of Montezuma, relative to which the most extravagant ideas had been formed, they could only collect an inconsiderable booty amid ruins and desolation, and the royal treasury was found empty. Guatimozin, aware of the impending fate of his capital, is said to have ordered what remained of the riches of his ancestors to be thrown into the lake, that they might not contribute to augment the triumph, or increase the power of the conqueror: and the Indian auxiliaries had carried off the greater part of the spoil, while the Spaniards were employed in completing the reduction of the city, and in taking measures for securing their conquest.

In consequence of this disappointment, a spirit of discontent diffused itself among the soldiers. Many of them disdained to accept of the small sum that fell to their share, and all murmured and exclaimed; some against Cortez and his confidants, whom they suspected of having secretly appropriated to their own use a large portion of the riches which should have been brought into the common stock; others against Guatimozin, whom they accused of obstinacy, in refusing to discover the place where he had hid his treasure; and several went so far as to threaten to write to the king, and complain, that, after so many dangers and fatigues, they were defrauded of their reward. Arguments, entreaties, and promises were employed in vain to appease their murmurs; so that Cortez, fearing a general mutiny, at last gave way to an action which stains the glory of one of the most illustrious conquests in the history of mankind.

Julian de Alderete, a name which deserves to be remembered with everlasting infamy, at once encouraged the malcontents in their clamours, and demanded as the king's treasurer in New Spain, by the appointment of the council of the Indies, that Guatimozin and his chief favourite should be put to the rack, in order to extort from them a discovery of the royal treasures; and Cortez, without regarding the former dignity of that prince, the exalted virtues which he had displayed, or his own promise of good usage solemnly pledged to him, consented to the atrocious deed. Guatimozin bore whatever the refined cruelty of his tormentors could inflict upon him without betraying the smallest change of countenance, or so much as intimating, that he had no treasures to discover; but his fellow-sufferer, overcome by the violence of the anguish, turned a dejected eye

towards his master, and seemed to implore his permission to reveal all that he knew. Darting on his subject a look of command mingled with contempt, that high spirited prince, checked his weakness by saying, "Am I reclining on a bed of roses?"—Overawed by the heroic reproach, the unhappy favourite persevered in dutiful silence, and stifling every groan, expired in an act of obedience to his sovereign. Cortez now resumed his authority, ashamed of a scene so horrid, and in a tone of indignation ordered Guatimozin to be taken from the rack. Struck with the fortitude of the royal sufferer, the victim of their avarice, even the soldiers melted into tears of compassion, and seemed to reproach those, who in compliance with their clamours, had so egregiously violated the rights of humanity*.

The malcontents being thus appeased, at the expense of their own feelings, and their general's honour, Cortez dismissed the auxiliary Indians, and endeavoured to restore peace and tranquillity to the new conquest. For this purpose he established a form of civil government according to the Spanish constitution; appointing alcaides, regidores, and other magistrates. His next care was to transmit an account of his successes to court, beseeching his majesty to continue and confirm these magistrates in their respective employments, and to make grants of lands and Indians, according to the practice in the islands, to such as had deserved them by their services.

But while Cortez was in this manner soliciting favours for others, he had not yet received a confirmation of his own authority; he therefore accompanied his dispatches with a valuable present, in order to give the king a proper idea of the importance of the country which he had conquered. The new magistrates also wrote a letter to his Catholic majesty, extolling the gallantry, and prudent conduct of their general, to whose wise measures and enterprising spirit they ascribed all their good fortune; and Cortez himself sent a minute detail of all his transactions, since his return to Mexico, requesting that some person of integrity and abilities might be sent out to survey the rich and extensive territory which had been subjected to the crown of Castile, together with a sufficient number of priests, of different denominations, to take care of the interests of religion, and assist in the propagation of the gospel among the natives of New Spain†.

The reduction of the capital, as had been foreseen, decided the fate of the Mexican empire; the fame of that event, like the motion communicated to the waters of a stagnated pool, passing from the centre to the extremities in circles, which multiply as they advance. The provinces submitted one after another to the conquerors. The very terror of their name was sufficient to procure the submission of a great number of caziques of whose counties Cortez was entirely ignorant. Among these was the king of Mechoacan, into whose territories a Spanish soldier had been seduced by the Indians. He was there civilly treated, and dismissed with such presents, as induced Cortez to send an embassy to that monarch, whose kingdom was reported to extend near three hundred leagues, in

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 1.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 5.

order to obtain some account of a country, which might prove a valuable accession to his former conquests.

In consequence of this embassy, the king of Mechoacan was induced to visit Cortez in person at Cuyocan; where he acknowledged himself a vassal of the king of Spain; made presents of great value; received some trinkets in return, and departed with the highest sentiments of the generosity, genius, and valour of the strangers, whose arms and military exercises he had beheld with wonder. Olid, with a hundred foot and forty horse, was sent to take possession of this new acquisition, in the name of his Catholic majesty, and to settle a colony there; after which he had instructions to penetrate into the province of Colima, and open a way to the South Sea. Great part of the coast of that ocean was soon discovered; and as Cortez imagined, according to the theory of Columbus, that it would yield a short and easy passage to the East Indies, he ordered ship-builders to repair to Zacatula, in order to equip a fleet destined for the Molucca islands, from the trade with which the Portuguese at this time drew immense wealth, all which he hoped to secure to the crown of Castile*.

With a view to facilitate this scheme, by keeping open the communication between the North and South Seas, as the chief materials for building the vessels must be brought from Villa Rica, Cortez dispatched Sandoval with a body of troops, to reduce the inhabitants of the intermediate country. He did not know, that, during the progress of his victorious arms in Mexico, the very plan which he was attempting to execute, had been undertaken and accomplished by a person in the service of his country. Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese gentleman, who had served several years in the East Indies, with distinguished valour, under the famous Albuquerque, disgusted with his general, and slighted by his sovereign, renounced his allegiance to an ungrateful master, and fled to the court of Castile, in hopes that his merit would there be more justly estimated. He endeavoured to recommend himself by reviving Columbus's original and favourite project, of discovering a passage to India by a westerly course, and without encroaching on that portion of the globe which was allotted to the Portuguese by the line of demarcation. Cardinal Ximenes, who at that time directed the affairs of Spain, listened with a favourable ear to Magellan's proposal; and as that minister was never deterred by the boldness of any design, or the expense of carrying it into execution, where he discerned a prospect of advantage, he recommended it to his master Charles V. who entering into the measure with no less ardour, honoured Magellan with the habit of St. Jago and the title of Captain General, and furnished him with five ships, victualled for two years, in order to enable him to accomplish his undertaking.

With this squadron Magellan sailed from Seville on the 10th of August, 1519; and after touching at the Canaries, stood directly south towards the equinoctial along the coast of America, but was so long retarded by tedious calms, and spent so much time in searching every bay and inlet for that communication with the

A. D. 1522.

A. D. 1517.

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. ii. c. 1.

BOOK I. South Sea which he wished to discover, that he did not reach the river de la Plata, till the 12th of January 1522. Allured to enter by the spacious opening through which that vast body of water pours itself into the Atlantic, he sailed up it for some days; but concluding at last from the shallowness of the stream, and the freshness of the water, that the wished for strait was not situated there, he returned, and continued his course towards the south. On the 1st of March he arrived in port St. Julian, about forty-eight degrees south of the line, where he resolved to winter, that season coming on in those latitudes. Here he lost one of his ships, and the Spaniards suffered so much from the excessive rigour of the climate, that they insisted on relinquishing the visionary project, and returning to Spain. But Magellan by ordering the principal mutineer to be assassinated, and another to be publicly executed, overawed the remainder of his followers, and continued his voyage still towards the south. In holding this course, he at length discovered, near the fifty-third degree of latitude, the mouth of a strait, into which he entered, notwithstanding the murmur of his crew, and the remonstrances of his officers. After sailing twenty days in that winding dangerous passage, which still bears his name, and where one of his ships deserted him, the great Southern Ocean opened to his view, and inspired him with new hopes, while he poured out his heart to Heaven in a transport of joy for the success which had already attended his endeavours*.

Magellan, however, was still at a greater distance than he imagined from the object of his wishes. Three months and twenty days did he sail in an uniform direction towards the north-west without discovering land; during which voyage, the longest that had ever been made in the unbounded ocean, his people suffered incredible distress from scarcity of provisions, putrid water, and all their attendant maladies. One circumstance, and one only, afforded them some consolation: they enjoyed an uninterrupted course of fair weather, with such mild winds as induced Magellan to bestow on that ocean the appellation of *Pacific*. At last they fell in with a cluster of small fertile islands, which afforded them refreshments in such abundance that their health was soon restored. From these islands, which he called De los Ladrones, he continued his voyage, and soon made a discovery of the islands now known by the name of the *Philippines*. In Zebu, one of the Philippines, he got into an unfortunate quarrel with the natives, who attacked him with a numerous body of well-armed troops; and while he fought gallantly at the head of his men, he was slain, together with several of his officers, by those fierce barbarians, on the 26th of April 1522 †.

On the death of Magellan, the expedition was prosecuted under Carvallo, who was chosen commodore, and afterwards under Espinosa. They encountered many difficulties, in ranging through the smaller islands scattered through the eastern part of the Indian ocean, touched at the great island of Borneo, and at last landed at Tidore, one of the Moluccas, to the astonishment of the Portuguese, who could

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. ii. c. 3. lib. vii. c. 2.
lib. ix. c. 3.

† Herrera, dec. II.

not comprehend how the Spaniards, by holding a westerly course, had arrived at that sequestered seat of their most valuable commerce, which they themselves had discovered by sailing in an opposite direction. At this and the adjacent isles they found a people acquainted with the benefits of extensive trade, and willing to open an intercourse with a new nation. They took in a cargo of spices, the distinguished produce of those islands, and with that, together with specimens of the commodities yielded by the other rich countries they had visited, the *Victory*, which of the two remaining ships was most fit for a long voyage, set sail for Europe, under the command of Juan Sebastian del Cano, the first man who circumnavigated the globe. He followed the course of the Portuguese by the Cape of Good Hope; and, after a variety of disasters, arrived at St. Lucar on the 6th of September, 1522*.

The Spanish merchants engaged eagerly in that lucrative and alluring commerce, which was thus opened to them, while men of science were employed in demonstrating that the spice islands were so situated as to belong to the crown of Castile, in consequence of the partition made by Alexander VI. But the Portuguese, alarmed at the intrusion of such formidable rivals, remonstrated and negotiated in Europe, at the same time that they obstructed in Asia the trade of the Spaniards, by force of arms; and Charles V. unwilling to add a war with Portugal to those in which he was already engaged, made over to that crown his claim to the Moluccas for a sum of money, in 1529†.

Before that time, some of the vessels fitted out by Cortez had arrived in the East, and visited several of these islands; and though the trade with the Moluccas was then relinquished, the voyage of Magellan was afterwards followed by commercial effects of very great importance to the Spaniards. The Philippine islands were reduced to subjection, and settlements there established; between which and the kingdom of New Spain, a regular intercourse is carried on, through the very channel marked out by the genius of Cortez. This observation brings us naturally back to the more immediate transactions of that great commander, at the same time that it forms an apology for so long a digression.

While Cortez was employed in such extensive schemes for the present and future aggrandisement of his country, it was his singular fate not only to be superseded in the government of that rich territory which he had acquired by such incredible efforts of valour and perseverance, but to be regarded as an undutiful subject, and subjected to a criminal prosecution. Soon after the reduction of Mexico, Christoval de Tapia arrived at Villa Rica, with a commission, obtained by the influence of the bishop of Burgos, empowering him to strip the conqueror of his authority, and assume the government of New Spain; to make a strict scrutiny into his proceedings, and transmit the result of such inquiries to the council of the Indies. But the bishop had chosen a very improper instrument to wreak his vengeance on Cortez. Tapia had neither the reputation nor talents that suited the high command to which he was appointed. The magistrates of Villa

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. ix. c. 3.

† Herrera, dec. III. lib. iv. c. 5.

BOOK I.
A. D. 1522.

Rica publicly charged him with incapacity, and required him to depart the colony, otherwise they would send him prisoner into Spain. He accordingly returned to Hispaniola, where he was blamed by the Royal Audience for going to New Spain contrary to their advice; and as he had no force to support his pretensions, Cortez, after a variety of negotiations, in which he expressed the most profound respect for the emperor's authority, prevailed on that weak man to abandon all thoughts of a station of which he was unworthy *.

Happily soon after eluding this blow the general received a favourable answer to his former dispatches. The juncture in which his deputies reached the court was favourable. The internal commotions, already mentioned, which had disquieted the beginning of Charles's reign were appeased. The ministers had leisure to turn their attention towards foreign affairs. The account of Cortez's victories filled his countrymen with admiration. The extent and value of his conquests became the object of vast and interesting hopes. Whatever stain he might have contracted by the irregularity of the steps which he took in order to attain power, was so fully effaced by the great actions which this had enabled him to perform, that every heart revolted at the thought of inflicting any censure on the man whose services entitled him to the highest marks of distinction. The public voice declared warmly in his favour; and Charles, arriving in Spain about this time, adopted the sentiments of his subjects with a youthful ardour. Judging that no person was so capable of maintaining the royal authority, or establishing good order both among his Spanish and Indian subjects, as the commander whom the former would willingly obey, and whom the latter had long been accustomed to fear and respect, he appointed Cortez captain-general and governor of New Spain, notwithstanding the claims of Velasquez, and the partial representations of the bishop of Burgos †.

Even before his jurisdiction received this legal sanction, Cortez ventured to exercise all the powers of a governor; and by various arrangements, some of which have been already noticed, endeavoured to render his conquest secure and beneficial to his country. He determined to establish the seat of government in its ancient station, and to raise Mexico from its ruins. In consequence of this idea, he nominated the magistrates, and divided the ground among the conquerors, and began to build the capital on a plan which has gradually formed the most magnificent city in the New World. At the same time he employed skilful persons to search for mines in different parts of the country, and even opened some that were richer than any which the Spaniards had yet discovered in America. He dispatched his principal officers to the remote provinces, and encouraged them to settle there, not only by bestowing upon them large tracts of land, but by granting them the same dominion over the Indians, and the same right to their service, which the Spaniards had assumed in the West Indies ‡.

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. i. c. 3.
Amer. book v.

† De Solis, lib. v. c. 8. Robertson, Hist.
‡ Herrera, dec. III. lib. i. c. 3.

It was not, however, without some difficulty that the Mexican empire could be reduced to the form of a Spanish province. Though the greater part of the caziques, or principal vassals, submitted soon after the fall of the capital, their subjection was rather nominal than real. Whenever they thought their rights invaded, they flew to arms; and the Spaniards, who considered every such struggle for independency, as the rebellion of subjects against their sovereign, chastised them with a severity, the very recital of which fills the soul with horror. After every insurrection, they put the chiefs to death in the most ignominious, or the most excruciating form that insolence or cruelty could suggest, while they reduced the common people to the most humiliating of all conditions, that of personal servitude. In the province of Panuco, sixty caziques, and four hundred nobles of inferior condition, were burnt at one time; and to complete the dreadful scene, the children and relations of the wretched victims were assembled, and compelled to be spectators of their dying agonies*.

But such inhuman policy seldom answers the desired end. The Mexicans, rendered desperate by oppression, repeatedly rose in defence of their liberties; and Guatimozin, roused by the sufferings of his people, formed a scheme for throwing off the Spanish yoke, and re-ascending the throne of his ancestors, by murdering Cortez and his principal officers. The plot was discovered, and the Mexicans received a most mortifying proof of their own degradation, and of the small regard in which the ancient dignity of their empire was held by their new masters. Cortez ordered the captive monarch, together with the kings of Tezeuco and Tacuba, who had been concerned in the conspiracy, to be tried by a court martial; and they were found guilty, condemned, and publicly hanged, like common felons, to the astonishment and horror of their countrymen, who had been accustomed to look up to them as beings of a superior order†.

Nor was the opposition raised by the fierce spirits of the Mexicans the only obstacle that Cortez had to struggle with in completing his conquest. He met with equal obstructions from the mutinous and refractory disposition of his officers. Olid openly revolted; and while the general was enduring the most incredible hardships, in order to reduce him to obedience, advancing through a wild and inhospitable country, filled with rivers and marshes from the lake of Mexico to the western extremity of Honduras, a conspiracy was forming against his authority in the very feat of his power. When Charles V. advanced Cortez to the government of New Spain, he at the same time appointed certain commissioners to receive and administer the royal revenue, with independent jurisdiction. These men, chosen from inferior stations of various departments of public business at Madrid, were so much elevated with their promotion, that they thought themselves called to a post of the first consequence: they therefore uniformly laboured to abridge the governor's authority, and to extend their own.

* Gomara, c. 155.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. ii. c. 5. It is somewhat surprising that Robertson should affirm that Guatimozin was condemned on a slight suspicion without the formality of a trial, and quote Herrera as his authority; whereas that author expressly affirms, that the unhappy monarch was "fully convicted, after a fair trial." Ut sup. dec. III.

With this view they pried narrowly into his conduct: they encouraged and gave ear to all malcontents and slanders; and having contracted the narrow ideas, suited to the sphere in which they had hitherto moved, could not conceive that the high authority which Cortez assumed could be consistent with the allegiance of a subject. They represented him, in their letters to the court, as an ambitious tyrant, who had usurped a jurisdiction, superior to law; who aspired at independence; and who might accomplish, if not prevented in time, those schemes which he apparently meditated, by his extensive influence and exorbitant wealth, having appropriated to his own use the treasures of Montezuma*.

These commissioners were intrusted with the civil government of Mexico during the general's absence; and on a report spread of his death, they ordered his goods to be put up to public sale, seized all his gold, and put his steward to the torture, in order to make him discover his master's treasure, great part of which they supposed he had concealed†. Meanwhile their letters having reached Spain, made such deep impression upon the ministers of Charles, that unmindful of Cortez's past services, or what he was then enduring to support the royal authority, by reducing the rebellious Olid to obedience, (a service in which he was employed above two years, and which required more fortitude of mind, patient perseverance, and personal courage, than all his conquests) they infused the same suspicions into the mind of their master, and prevailed on him to order a solemn inquest to be made into the governor's conduct.

July 2,
A. D. 1527.

This commission was intrusted to the licentiate Ponce de Leon, who arrived at Mexico amid the public rejoicings occasioned by the return of Cortez, and his triumph over all his enemies, both Spaniards and Indians. At such a season, when the soul unbends itself, after a long course of mental and personal exertion, and enjoys with honest pride the luxury of well earned applause, the smallest mortification is keenly felt. But deeply wounded as the mind of Cortez was at this unexpected return for his important services, he received the person appointed to enquire into his proceedings, and vested with powers to seize his person, if necessary, not only with dignity but composure. Ponce de Leon died before he had well opened his commission; but as the object of his appointment was fully known, that event did not afford much consolation to Cortez. Every person in office, who had arrived in Spain since the conquest, was a spy upon his conduct, and with malicious ingenuity gave an unfavourable representation of his actions. Among these was Nuno de Guzman, governor of the province of Panuco, whose enormous cruelties towards the Indians, and his infamous accusations against Cortez, have rendered his very name detestable to every feeling heart and liberal mind.

The apprehensions of the emperor and his ministers increased. A new commission of inquiry was issued, and three judges, to whom the civil power was chiefly committed, were sent out to New Spain, in order to examine into the conduct of the governor, and with powers to punish him, if he should be found to have

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. ii. c. 4.

† Id. *ibid.*

exceeded what was consistent with the fidelity of a subject. These judges, however, were supported by no force to enable them to execute their sentence; and some of Cortez's indignant followers, urged him to assert his own rights against his ungrateful country, and to seize with a bold hand that power which the courtiers meanly accused him of coveting: but though he beheld the approaching crisis of his fortune with all the violent emotions natural to a haughty mind, conscious of high desert, and receiving unworthy treatment, he was actuated by such sentiments of loyalty, as to reject their dangerous counsels, at a time when he could surely have established an independent sovereignty. He chose the only course in which he could secure his own dignity without departing from his duty: he resolved not to expose himself to the ignominy of a trial, in a country which had been the scene of his triumphs; but, without waiting for his judges, to repair immediately to Spain, and commit himself and his cause to the justice and generosity of his sovereign*.

The arrival of Cortez at the Spanish court, where he appeared with a splendour worthy of the conqueror of Mexico, removed every suspicion and fear that had been entertained in regard to his intentions. Having nothing now to apprehend from his designs, the emperor received him with the highest marks of respect; as a person whom the consciousness of his own innocence had brought into the presence of his master, and whose eminent services entitled him to the most distinguished tokens of royal favour. Charles admitted him to the same familiar intercourse with himself that was enjoyed by noblemen of the first rank; and as a perpetual memorial of his heroic actions, he bestowed upon him the title of Marquis of the Vale of Guaxaca, and the grant of a vast territory in New Spain, with the towns and villages belonging to the same, their jurisdictions, rights, privileges, and immunities†.

In this visit to his native country, Cortez was accompanied by several Mexicans and Tlascalans of distinction, as well as by some of the most considerable of his own officers, for whom he obtained a confirmation of all the grants of land which he had made to them. Nor was he unmindful of his Indian allies: the republic of Tlascala was declared free, in consideration of its faithful services‡. But amid so many external proofs of regard, symptoms of remaining distrust still appeared; and Cortez solicited in vain to be reinstated in the government of New Spain. Too sagacious to commit such an important charge to a man whom he had once suspected, Charles peremptorily refused to invest him with powers which he might find it impossible to controul. He left in his hands the military department, with the title of Captain-general; but the supreme direction of civil affairs was placed in a board called *The Audience of New Spain*||. Cortez therefore, though dignified with titles, returned to Mexico with diminished authority.

A. D. 1530.

When the marquis of Guaxaca arrived in New Spain, the natives resorted to him in crowds, not as their conqueror but their protector. The judges appointed

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. iv. c. 3. Robertson, Hist. Americ. b. v.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Herrera, dec. III. lib. iv. c. 3.

|| Id. ibid.

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A. D. 1530.

to inquire into his conduct, with Nuno de Guzman at their head, hungry and rapacious, and scarce considering the Indians as human creatures, had murdered and oppressed them without remorse. The Board of Audience somewhat alleviated these evils; but the division of the civil and military power proved the source of perpetual dissensions, which embittered the life of Cortez, and thwarted all his measures. He never, however, lost sight of his allegiance, nor suffered private animosity to prejudice the service of his country. Having now no opportunity of displaying his active talents but in attempting discoveries, he formed various schemes for that purpose, all of which bear the marks of a superior genius. Besides penetrating into the most remote parts of the Mexican empire, he fitted out successively several squadrons from the ports of New Spain on the South Sea, and at last discovered the large peninsula of California. But that not being an object sufficient to satisfy his sanguine expectations, and finding himself opposed, even in this unsuccessful line, by Antonio de Mendoza, who, to his inexpressible mortification, had been appointed viceroy over that rich territory which he had added to the crown of Castile, he once more sought redress in his native country; where, to the eternal disgrace of an ungrateful court, he was alternately treated with insolence and neglect. His claims were disregarded; and the conqueror of Mexico, so long accustomed to high command, was doomed to waste the remainder of his years in fruitless applications to ministers and judges.*.

A. D. 1536.

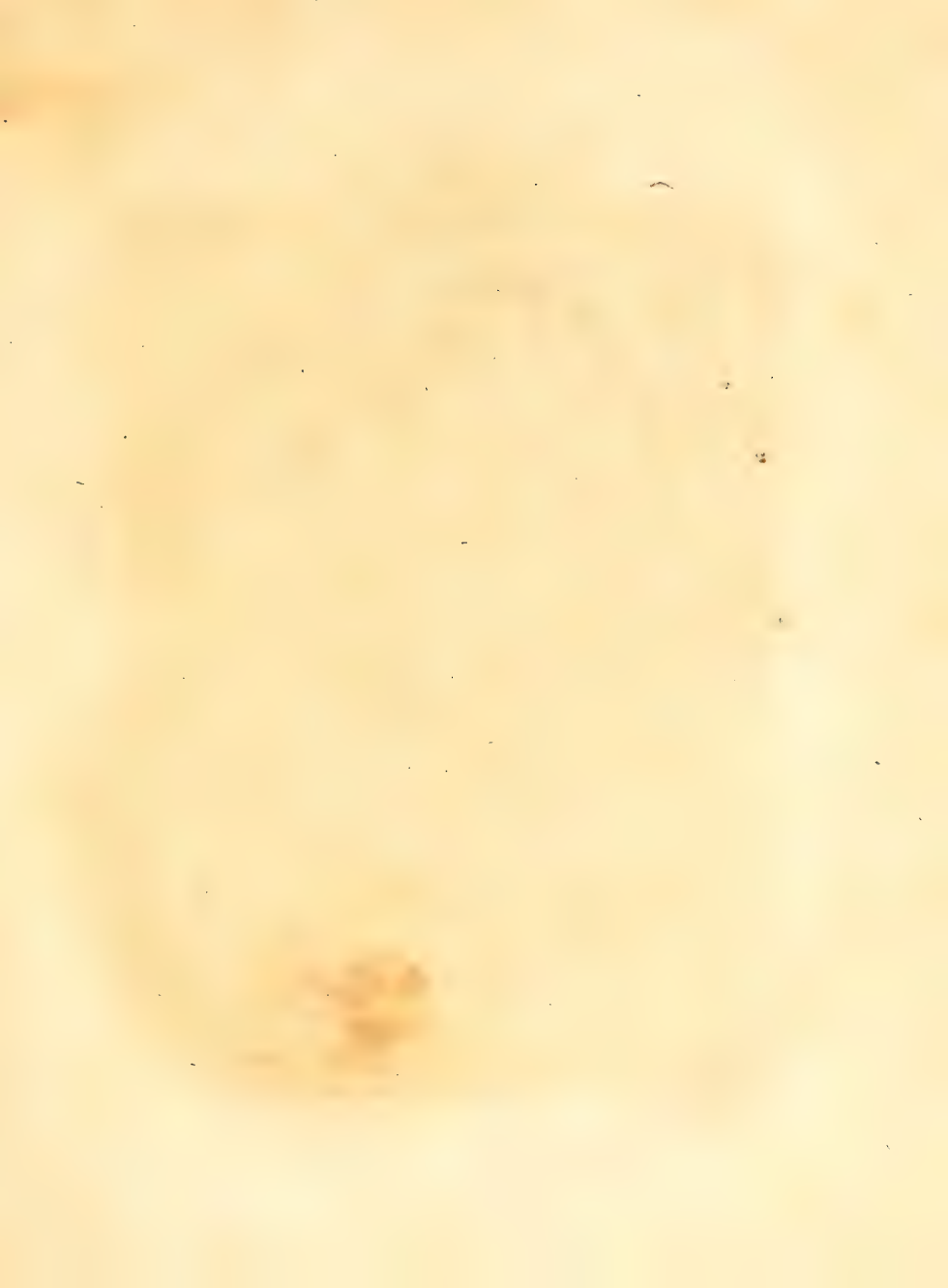
A. D. 1540.

C H A P. VIII.

The Discovery of Peru by Pizarro, and the Progress of the Spanish Arms to the Captivity and Death of the Inca, Atahualpa.

BESIDES Mexico, there was another great empire in America, whose progress in arts and policy entitled it to be considered as a civilized state, namely Peru. Towards this country, of whose opulence he had received several intimations, Balboa was preparing to sail, when he was recalled, as already observed, by the cruel jealousy of his father-in-law, Pedrarias Davila, governor of the Spanish settlement of Santa Maria in Darien, and condemned to suffer the punishment of a traitor. But Pedrarias wanted talents to execute himself that scheme which his ambition led him to obstruct in another, by such a violent act of injustice. Though the removal of the settlement to Panama, on the other side of the isthmus, enabled the Spaniards to acquire a more perfect knowledge of the coasts of the South Sea, the governor was so much discouraged with the unpromising aspect of the country to the east, that he turned his arms

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. v. c. 6. dec. IV. lib. vi. c. 4. lib. viii. c. 1. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. v.





towards another quarter, and made himself master of Nicaragua. Others, to whom he readily granted commissions to prosecute a project which he himself had abandoned, likewise relinquished it, after several unsuccessful attempts; and it became the general opinion, that the scheme of Balboa was either impracticable, or altogether visionary*.

But what seems chimerical or impossible to persons of ordinary capacity, often appears both facile and certain to men of superior genius. Francisco Pizarro, who had been the companion of Balboa, and was intimately acquainted with the foundation of his hopes, resolved to revive the project of that great commander, at a time when it was universally considered as ideal. He had served successfully under Pedrarias, and did not doubt of obtaining his permission; but as his own fortune was inconsiderable, after all the toils and dangers which he had encountered, he communicated his sentiments on this subject to Diego de Almagro, an officer who had also distinguished himself in the service of Pedrarias, and who was more wealthy. Almagro readily embraced the proposal, and the sanction of the governor was obtained. But the united fortunes of these two soldiers being still found insufficient for such an enterprise, they associated with them Fernando de Luque, a mercenary priest, who had acquired immense wealth by all the means which superstition rendered easy to his profession in that age†.

As the basis of this association, it was agreed, that each of the confederates should embark his whole fortune in the project; that the wealth accruing from it should be equally shared; and that they should reciprocally observe an inviolable fidelity. The parts which each of them were to take in this great undertaking, were distributed as the good of the common cause seemed to demand. Pizarro, as the person of the greatest experience, and who had the most perfect knowledge of the object of the expedition, agreed to command in person the armament which was to go first upon discovery. Almagro offered to conduct the supplies of provisions, military stores, and such reinforcements of troops as Pizarro might require; while Luque was to remain at Panama to furnish the necessary means, and superintend whatever was carrying on for the general interest. In order to give more force to these engagements, religion, which, in that age, continually mingled itself with the spirit of adventure, was called in to ratify a confederacy formed by avarice and ambition. Luque said mass, and divided a consecrated host into three parts; one of which he ate himself, and gave the other two to his associates; all three swearing by the blood of their god, that they would not spare the blood of man, in prosecuting their common advantage‡.

The armament fitted out in consequence of this confederacy, was such as might have been expected from three private men in a remote and sickly colony, but very little suited to the greatness of the object, which they had in view. In

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. iii. c. 1, 2.

† Almagro was a foundling, and Pizarro the natural son of a gentleman of Extremadura, who had neglected his education to such a degree that he could not even read. Zarate, lib. iv. c. 9.

lib. iii. c. 1. Zarate, lib. i. c. 1.

‡ Herrera, dec. III.

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A. D. 1514.

Nov. 14.

order to attempt the conquest of one of the most extensive empires on the face of the earth, Pizarro sailed from Panama with a single ship, and an hundred and fourteen men; and so ignorant were the Spaniards of the climate of America, that he embarked at the very season when the periodical winds set in, directly adverse to the course which he proposed to steer. After beating about for some time, he reached Port Pinas, and proceeded with a party up the river Biru; but finding the country thinly peopled, uncultivated, and uninviting, he returned to his vessel, wasted with famine and fatigue, and continued his voyage along the coast. Scarcity of provisions, however, obliged him soon to put into another port, where he found the country no less rugged and disagreeable than that which he had last visited; the low grounds being converted into swamps by the overflowing of rivers, the higher, covered with impervious woods, and the few inhabitants miserable savages*.

From this place, which the Spaniards called *La Hambre*, the ship was dispatched to the Pearl Islands for a supply of provisions, Pizarro and his soldiers being exposed in the meantime to all the horrors of want and disease. During this terrible interval, twenty-seven of them died; yet so great was the fortitude of the survivors, encouraged by the chearful perseverance of their general, that the ship no sooner returned, than they agreed to prosecute the voyage. But Almagro, having heard of their distress, had sailed from Panama with seventy men towards that part of the coast where he hoped to meet with them; and landing at a place where Pizarro had lately touched, imprudently attacked an Indian town; was repulsed, after a sharp conflict, and lost one of his eyes by the wound of an arrow. On reembarking, he continued his course along the coast, and advanced as far as the river St. Juan, in the province of Popayan, where both the country and the inhabitants appeared with a more promising aspect than any the confederates had yet visited. This intelligence he communicated to Pizarro, whom he found on his return at Chuchama; and that dawn of better fortune was sufficient to animate these sanguine projectors to persevere in the prosecution of their scheme, notwithstanding all the sufferings they had endured†.

It was agreed that Almagro should repair to Panama, in order to procure succours; but Pedrarias being at that time preparing to march into Nicaragua against one of his officers, who had thrown off his authority, a small number of men only were permitted to be levied for this service. Almagro, however, procured a plentiful supply of provisions, and with two ships and eighty recruits joined Pizarro at Chuchama. After a variety of disasters and disappointments, similar to those which they had already experienced, they reached the bay of St. Matthew on the coast of Quito, where they discovered a country and inhabitants very different from any they had yet beheld on the Southern Ocean; the lands being level and cultivated, the people decently clothed, and adorned with several trinkets of gold and silver.

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. iii. c. 1.

† Id. *ibid.*

But

June 24,
A. D. 1525.

A. D. 1526.

But ardent as the spirits of the confederates were, they durst not attempt to invade a country so populous with an handful of men worn out with fatigue, and enfeebled by diseases. Pizarro retired to the small island of Gallo with the troops, while Almagro returned to Panama, in hopes of procuring such a reinforcement as should enable them to subdue that rich country whose existence seemed now sufficiently established. This assurance alone, it was expected, would have encouraged the requisite number of adventurers to engage in the enterprise; and in an age when the slightest information served to inspire men with the greatest confidence, and when avarice and glory were the prevailing passions, great effects might have been expected from so near an approach to perfect discovery. But some of the soldiers having secretly conveyed to their friends at Panama an account of their own miseries, and the misfortunes of the armament, Almagro met with a very ungracious reception from Pedro de los Rios, who had succeeded Pedrarias in the government of that colony. Concluding that an expedition attended with so great waste of men must be detrimental to an infant settlement, he not only prohibited the raising of new levies, but dispatched a vessel to bring home Pizarro and his followers from the island of Gallo*.

Deeply affected by a measure which they could not prevent, and durst not oppose, Almagro and Luque found means to communicate their sentiments privately to Pizarro, exhorting him rather to perish than relinquish a scheme on which depended all their hopes of reputation and fortune. Pizarro needed no incentive to persist in a scheme on which his mind was so strongly bent. Inflexibly obstinate in all his purposes, he positively refused to obey the governor's command, and used all his address in order to persuade his men to embrace the same resolution. It grieved him, he said, that they should forego the reward of all their sufferings when it was within their reach. But all his eloquence had no effect: the incredible calamities to which the soldiers had been exposed were still so recent in their memories, and the thoughts of revisiting their families and friends after a long absence, rushed with such joy into their minds, that when the captain sent to carry them off drew a line with his sword upon the sand, desiring such as wished to return home to pass over it, and permitting the rest to stay with Pizarro, only thirteen daring veterans had resolution to remain with their commander in that extremity of his fortune †.

With this small but determined band Pizarro fixed his residence in the island of Gorgona, which being farther removed from the coast than Gallo, he considered as a more secure retreat. There he waited with patience for those supplies which he trusted the activity of his associates would be able to procure. Meanwhile Almagro and Luque were not inattentive to his safety. They exclaimed loudly against the infamy of exposing brave men engaged in the public service, and chargeable with no error but what flowed from an excess of zeal to perish like the most odious criminals in a desert island; and the governor, overcome by their repeated entreaties and expostulations, which were seconded by the voice of

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 3.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. iii. c. 3.

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A. D. 1525.

This precaution, however, had not the effect intended. Though Pizarro and his few faithful associates had by this time remained five months in an island infamous for the most unhealthy climate in that region of America, the vessel no sooner arrived from Panamá than all their sufferings were forgot, and they resumed their scheme with fresh ardour. The captain of the ship being induced to join them by the promises of Pizarro, they prosecuted their voyage towards the south east, and on the twentieth day after their departure from Gorgona they discovered the coast of Peru. After touching at some less considerable places they landed at Tumbez, about three degrees south of the line, distinguished by its stately temple and a palace of the Incas or sovereigns of the country. There the Spaniards first feasted their eyes with a view of the opulence and civilization of the Peruvian empire: they beheld several stately structures, fields cultivated with an appearance of regular industry, and a people so far surpassing the other inhabitants of the New World in improvement as to have tame animals to carry their burthens; but what more particularly attracted their notice was the profusion of gold and silver, not only employed as ornaments for the person, or in the sacred utensils of the temples, but in several vessels for common use, of such a size as left them no room to doubt but the precious metals were found in that country in an abundance equal to their most sanguine hopes and dreams of inexhaustible treasures*.

But Pizarro, with the slender force then under his command, could only view the rich territory of which he hoped hereafter to reap the spoils. He ranged, however, for some time along the coast, every where maintaining a peaceable intercourse with the natives, whose polished manners filled him with astonishment, while their inoffensive disposition encouraged him with the hope of subjecting them to the dominion of Spain. They came cheerfully on board his vessel, supplied him abundantly with provisions, invited him on shore to their habitations, insisted on leaving hostages for his security, and made him several presents of considerable value. With these and some of their Llamas or tame cattle, to which the Spaniards gave the name of Sheep, some specimens of their works of ingenuity, and two youths, whom he proposed to instruct in the Castilian language, that they might serve as interpreters in a future expedition, Pizarro arrived at Panama towards the close of the year 1527, after having spent three years in a voyage, during which he had suffered hardships, or encountered dangers with a degree of patience and fortitude equal, if not superior, to what is recorded of any of the conquerors of the New World†.

Pizarro was received with great joy at Panama by persons of all ranks; but neither the incredible opulence of the country which he had discovered, nor his bitter complaints on account of that unseasonable recall of his forces, which had

* *Herrera*, dec. III. lib. iii. c. 3, 4.

† *Id. ibid.* *Zarate*, lib. i. c. 2.

put it out of his power to attempt making any settlement, could move the governor to authorise an expedition which he foresaw might prove the ruin of the province in which he presided, by stimulating it to an effort beyond its strength. This obstruction, however, did not abate the ardor of the confederates: they resolved to solicit their sovereign for that permission which they could not procure from his delegate. With this view they sent Pizarro as their agent into Spain, after adjusting among themselves that he should claim the station of governor, Almagro that of lieutenant-governor, and Luque the dignity of bishop in the country which they purposed to conquer; though their fortunes were now so much exhausted, and their credit so deeply mortgaged, that it was with difficulty they could borrow fifteen hundred pesos in order to defray the expence of his voyage *.

Pizarro arrived safe at Seville, and immediately waited on the emperor at Toledo with the unembarrassed dignity of a man conscious of eminent services. His sovereign received him graciously; and he conducted his negotiations with a degree of address and insinuation that could not have been expected either from his education, or former course of life. The feeling description of his own sufferings, and the pompous account of the country which he had discovered, little expected from a rough foldier, confirmed by the specimens of its productions which he exhibited, made a deep impression on the mind of Charles and his ministers: they not only approved of the intended expedition, but seemed interested in the success of its projector. Presuming on the favourable dispositions of the court, Pizarro paid little attention to his contract with his associates. He obtained for Luque the ecclesiastical dignity to which he aspired, as it did not interfere with his own pretensions; but for Almagro he requested only the command of the fortress which should be erected at Tumbez, while he secured to himself whatever his boundless ambition could desire. He obtained leave to carry on the discovery and conquest of Peru for the space of two hundred leagues along that coast, with the title of governor, captain-general, and adelantado of all the country which he had discovered, and hoped to subdue. His jurisdiction was declared independent of the governor of Panama; to be supreme both in civil and military affairs: he had power to nominate all the officers who were to serve under him, and a right to all the privileges and emoluments usually granted to adventurers in the New World †.

In return for these concessions, Pizarro engaged to raise two hundred and fifty men, and to provide the ships, arms, and military stores necessary for subjecting to the crown of Spain that opulent country, over which he was appointed governor. But so low was his fortune and credit, that he was only able to compleat half the number. With this slender force, accompanied by his three brothers, Ferdinand, Juan, and Gonzalo, he landed at Nombre de Dios, and marched across the isthmus to Panama. His brothers were all in the prime of life, and

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. iv. c. 1.

† Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 1.

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A. D. 1525.

men of such abilities and courage as enabled them to take a distinguished part in his subsequent transactions.

On his arrival at Panama, Pizarro found himself involved in new troubles. Almagro, exasperated at the manner in which the negotiation had been conducted, not only refused to act any longer in concert with a man whose perfidy had excluded him from that power and honour to which he had a just claim, but laboured to form a new association, in order to thwart, or rival, the discoveries of his former confederate. A reconciliation, however, was brought about through the interposition of Luque, who was well satisfied with his own appointment, and the confederacy was renewed on its original terms; that the project should be carried on at the common expence of the associates, and the profits accruing from it equally divided among them; Pizarro promising to relinquish the office of *adelantado*, and to concur in soliciting that title with an independent government for Almagro*.

Even after this reconciliation, the confederates were only able, by the utmost efforts of their united interest, to fit out three small vessels, on board of which were an hundred and eighty-five soldiers, thirty-seven of whom were horsemen. Animated by the progress of his countrymen in America, and by the prospect of the immense wealth which he hoped to acquire, Pizarro did not hesitate to sail with this contemptible armament to invade a mighty empire; Almagro being left as formerly to follow him with what supplies he should be able to procure. His intention was, not to touch at any port before he reached Tumbez; but meeting with adverse winds and currents, he was obliged to land his troops in the bay of St. Matthew, an hundred leagues to the north of that destination. Here a council of war was held; in which it was resolved, that the troops should advance along the shore towards the south, and the ships keep near the coast, in case of any disaster.

In this march the Spaniards encountered incredible hardships. The country was rough, barren, and desolate, abounding with rivers and morasses; and as they had to pass all the rivers near their mouth, where the body of water is greatest, they were every day obliged to make floats, with infinite labour and fatigue. Pizarro himself was the chief guide as well as commander, and conducted every thing with equal prudence and vigour; animating his people alike by his exhortations and example, and bearing a principal share in every hazardous and laborious task. So great was his patience, humility, and perseverance, that he often assisted in carrying the sick upon his own shoulders!—But all this was not sufficient to prevent the new levied soldiers from reproaching him with deceiving them, and every one must have become backward to the service, if in these inhospitable regions, they had not met with some appearances of wealth and cultivation that seemed to justify the report of their leader, concerning the country towards which they were advancing. Having reached the province of Coaque, they plundered the principal town, and seized vessels of gold and silver to the

April 14,
A. D. 1531.

* Zarate, lib. i. c. 3.

value of twenty thousand pefos, befides many precious ftones, and other rich booty *. CHAP. VIII.
A. D. 1531.

This fpoil at once difpelled the doubts of the foldiers, and animated them with the moft fanguine expectations; and Pizarro, whofe provident attention never let fliip any occafion that could be turned to his advantage, inftantly difpatched one of his fhips to Panama with a large remittance to Almagro, and another to Nicaragua, with a confiderable fum to fome perfons of influence in that province, in hopes of alluring adventurers into his fervice by this early difplay of the wealth of Peru. Meanwhile he continued his march along the coaft, and met with little or no oppofition till he attacked the ifland of Puna, in the bay of Guayquil. As that was a place of confiderable importance, by reafon of the falt-works there eftablifhed, and better peopled than the country through which he had paffed, he met with an obftinate refiftance, and fpent fix months in reducing the inhabitants to fubjection †.

From Puna Pizarro paffed over to Tumbez, which he took and plundered. A. D. 1532. Here he was obliged to remain three months, by reafon of the diftempers that raged among his men. He had already experienced the advantage of his prudent policy in fpreading the fame of his firft fuccefs. Two detachments had arrived from Nicaragua; and though neither exceeded thirty men, they were efteemed a confiderable reinforcement, being commanded by Sebastian Benalcazar and Hernando Soto, officers equal to any who had commanded in the New World. But thefe being ftill judged infufficient for the conqueft which he had in view, he difpatched the remaining vefTel to Panama, with all the treasure found in Tumbez, to be laid out by Almagro in raifing men, and procuring a fupply of provifions and military ftores.

The next care of Pizarro was to found a colony in order to fecure his footing in the country; and having difcovered, in his excurfions from Tumbez, an advantageous ftation near the mouth of the river Piura, he there eftablifhed the firft Spanifh fettlement in Peru, to which he gave the name of St. Michael. During his ftay at this place, to which he removed the greater part of his army, and where he was employed for feveral months in erecting fuch buildings as were requifite for defence or fhelter, he made it his bufinefs to inquire into the character of the Peruvians, the power of their fovereigns, and the ftate of the empire at that time. Some knowledge of thefe particulars was neceffary to enable him to conduct his operations with propriety, and an attention to the fame objects is equally neceffary to enable us to account for his future fuccefs, or the feeble oppofition which had hitherto been made to his arms.

The Peruvian empire, (of whofe origin and laws a particular account fhall be given in its proper place,) had fubfifted, according to tradition, about four hun-

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. v. c. 1. "The natives," fays this author, with his ufually fimplicity, (fpeaking of the booty) "had time enough to have fecured it; but as they had done no harm to thofe men, they thought they would not hurt them, and that they fhould all make merry together." Ut fupra. What a reproach on the rapacity of his countrymen!

† Zarate, lib. ii. c. 3. Herrera, dec. III. lib. v. c. 1. Herrera, ut fupra.

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A. D. 1532.

dred years, and extended in length almost eighteen hundred miles along the coast of the South Sea. Its breadth was less considerable, in few places exceeding fifty miles, being uniformly bounded by the vast ridge of the Andes, which stretch from one end of South America to the other. This country was governed by a race of sovereigns who took the name of *Lucas*, and were supposed to be the offspring of the Sun, the chief object of worship among the Peruvians. In consequence of this idea, which was propagated by Manco Capac, the founder of the monarchy, the Incas were not only obeyed as sovereigns, but revered as divinities. Their authority was unlimited and absolute, in the most extensive meaning of the words: their blood was held to be sacred, and never allowed to be contaminated by intermarriages with the people: and the royal family, thus separated from the rest of the nation, was farther distinguished by peculiarities in dress and ornaments, unlawful for others to assume *. In no corner of Asia was despotism ever more complete.

But the obedience required by the Incas was rather filial than slavish; and if we may believe the accounts of their countrymen, they were less prompted to extend their dominion by the rage of conquest, than the desire of diffusing the blessings of civilization. This benevolent character is said to have been uniformly preserved during a succession of twelve monarchs, the last of whom, named Huana Capac, was seated on the throne, when the Spaniards first visited the coast of Peru. He is represented as a prince equally distinguished by the pacific virtues peculiar to his race, and by his martial talents. Having subjected to his sway the kingdom of Quito, a conquest of such extent and importance as almost doubled the power of the Peruvian empire, he married the daughter of the vanquished monarch, notwithstanding the ancient and fundamental law of the constitution against polluting the royal blood by any foreign alliance. This princess bore him a son named Atahualpa, whom, on his death, which seems to have happened in the year 1529, he appointed his successor in the kingdom of Quito, leaving the rest of his dominions to Huascar, his eldest son, by a mother of the sacred race.

A destination so repugnant to the established maxims of the empire concerning the succession was no sooner known at Cuzco, the capital, than it excited general disgust, and encouraged Huascar to claim the whole dominions of his father, both hereditary and acquired. He accordingly commanded his brother to surrender the government of Quito, and to acknowledge him as his sovereign; but Atahualpa being at the head of the flower of the Peruvian forces, who had followed his father into that province, and whom he had gained to his interest, first eluded the demand of Huascar, and next marched against him in an hostile form. Huascar did not decline the combat. The two armies met in the vale of Xauxa, where an obstinate battle was fought, and victory declared for Atahualpa. Huascar again collected his shattered forces, was finally defeated, taken prisoner, and confined in the tower of Cuzco †.

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. ix. c. 1.

† Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 1.

In consequence of this civil war, which raged in all its fury when the Spaniards landed in the bay of St. Matthew, Pizarro was permitted to carry on his operations unmolested, and to advance to the heart of the empire, before one effort of its power had been exerted to stop his progress; for though the two competitors had received early accounts of the invasion and violent proceedings of the Spaniards, they were so intent on supporting their respective claims, that they paid no attention to the motions of an enemy, to whose career they imagined it would be easy to give a check after they should be more at leisure. The same mistaken opinion influenced the conduct of Atahualpa, even after the defeat of his brother: he thought it of more importance to settle the affairs of his empire, than to go in quest of an handful of strangers, who might at any time be crushed†.

Meanwhile Pizarro, having received perfect information in regard to the struggle between the two contending factions, and perceiving at once the advantage which might be derived from this divided state of the empire, determined to push forward, without waiting for farther supplies, in hopes of being able to strike some decisive blow before the Peruvians could recover sufficient union to oppose him with vigour. He accordingly ordered his troops to be mustered; but as he was under the necessity of leaving a proper garrison in St. Michael, which was equally important as a place of retreat, in case of any disaster, and as a port for receiving such supplies as should come from Panama, the number remaining to accompany him was very inconsiderable. Sixty-two horsemen, and an hundred and six foot soldiers, three of whom only were armed with muskets*, formed the slender and ill-accounted train destined to overturn the empire of the Incas.

With this handful of men, Pizarro boldly advanced through an hostile country, altogether unknown to him, towards Caxamalca, where Atahualpa was encamped with a considerable army. Before he had proceeded half way, he was met by an officer from the Inca, with a valuable present sent by that prince, accompanied with an offer of his alliance, and a promise of a friendly reception at Caxamalca. Pizarro, who was not inferior in policy to any of his countrymen who had served in America, artfully replied, That he accepted of the present, as coming from so great a prince, and having heard that he was at war with a faction, which disputed his title to the throne, he was willing to assist him with his followers; but that his principal motive for this visit was to deliver an embassy from his master, the king of Spain, a mighty monarch, who was desirous of enlightening the Peruvians with the knowledge of true religion‡.

Without waiting for an answer, Pizarro continued his journey across the sandy desert between St. Michael and Motupè, where the most feeble effort of an enemy, added to the distresses which he unavoidably suffered, must have proved fatal to his hopes. But the Peruvians, who like the Mexicans, were entirely at a loss what idea to form of the character of their new guests, continued irresolute, till they were caught in the net of their policy. Alarmed at the accounts which he had received of the terrible effects of the arms and horses of the Spaniards at

† Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 1.

* Id. *ibid.*

‡ Ut supra.

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A.D. 1532.

Puna and Tumbez, Atahualpa wanted firmness to oppose them openly on their march. His first ambassador is supposed to have been sent as a spy; but Pizarro's declaration of his pacific intentions had so much influence upon a credulous mind under the impressions of fear, that he was permitted to advance from Motupe towards the mountains which encompass the low country of Peru, and to pass, without opposition, through a defile so narrow and difficult, that a few men might have defended it against a numerous army. Here Pizarro halted to refresh his troops after their fatiguing march, and took quiet possession of the fortress erected for the security of that important station †.

While the Spaniards were resting themselves at this place, an embassy arrived from the Inca, in consequence of the message sent by Pizarro, and as they approached nearer to Caxamalca, Atahualpa frequently repeated his professions of friendship; to all which Pizarro returned the same ambiguous answer, relative to the greatness of the king his master, his benevolent and pacific intentions, accompanied with an offer of his assistance to humble the enemies of the Inca. In the mean time the Spaniards were divided in their sentiments relative to the purpose of these embassies, which were all accompanied with magnificent presents. Some ascribed them wholly to the munificence, hospitality, and friendly intentions of the Inca; others regarded them as a cover to his hostile designs, while the more sanguine spirits thought they could discover his fear under this extraordinary appearance of courtesy. All however agreed, that they could not observe too much caution in their march.

The Spaniards arrived at Caxamalca towards the evening, and took possession of a large court, on one side of which was a royal palace, and on the other a temple of the Sun, the whole surrounded with a strong wall. As soon as Pizarro had posted his troops in this advantageous station, he deliberated with his officers, whether it was not requisite that he should send a formal embassy to the camp of Atahualpa, which was about a league distant from the town, to acknowledge the civilities received, to confirm the repeated declarations of his pacific disposition, and to desire an interview with the Inca, that he might explain more fully the object of his commission. The proposal was agreed to, and Ferdinand Pizarro, the general's brother, and Hernando Soto were dispatched to wait upon Atahualpa, with instructions to the foregoing effect *.

Notice having been given of the arrival of the Spanish deputies, they found the Peruvian army drawn up to receive them. As they passed the ranks, the Peruvians gazed with astonishment on the horses; and Soto leaping over a ditch, plunging, rearing, and curveting with his courser, greatly delighted the simple spectators, who could scarcely separate in imagination the rider from the horse, taking both for one animal. Pizarro remained behind with the guard, while Soto and his attendants were conducted into the Inca's presence, by an officer appointed for that purpose. The amazement on both sides was nearly equal at this interview. The Spaniards admired the riches, grandeur, and state of the

† Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 2.

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 3.

The Temple of the Sun.



Inca, while that monarch and his subjects were surpris'd at the dress, arms, manners, and personal appearance of their visitors. Some minutes pass'd in profound silence; at length the Spaniards recovering themselves, approach'd the throne of gold on which Atahualpa was seated, making the most submissive obeisances as they advanced. When Soto came within a proper distance, the Inca rose up, embraced him cordially, and bid him welcome to his dominions. An elegant entertainment was immediately serv'd up by six girls and as many boys, handsomely dress'd. At the same time two beautiful virgins of the royal blood advanced, holding in their hands small cups of gold, fill'd with the liquor commonly us'd by the Incas; of which they gave one to Atahualpa, and another to Soto, who drank peace and friendship to each other, according to the custom of Peru. These ceremonies being over, and Ferdinand Pizarro came up, on perceiving that all was pacific, the deputies deliver'd their commission, and Atahualpa promised to visit the Spanish general next day in his quarters*.

The cordiality of this reception was sufficient to have banish'd all suspicion of hostile intentions from the mind of Pizarro. But he perceiv'd the weakness of the prince he had to deal with, and did not wish to suppose him innocent. Atahualpa had told the deputies, that he hop'd it would give no umbrage, if he came to Caxamalca attended by his army, as was customary when the Incas travel'd. They assur'd him it would not; but Pizarro, whose insight into human nature was as deep and penetrating as his temper was unfeeling and cruel, determin'd to make this circumstance a pretext for carrying into execution a scheme which he had already form'd. Sensible, from his long acquaintance with American manners, of what importance it was to have the sovereign in his power, he had invit'd Atahualpa to an interview, with a resolution to seize his person; and he now determin'd to avail himself of the unsuspecting simplicity with which that monarch reli'd on his professions for the accomplishment of this design, no less perfidious than daring. While the minds of his soldiers were yet warm with admiration and desire of the wealth of the Peruvian camp, of which the most exaggerated accounts had been given by those who beheld it, he unfold'd to them his design, under pretence of counteracting the Inca's treachery. After animating them by the powerful motives of avarice, glory, and self-preservation, he divid'd his cavalry into four small squadrons, under the command of his brother Ferdinand, Soto, Benalcazar, and Christopher de Mena: the musketeers were plac'd in a tower of the palace, whence they might fire to advantage upon the defenceless multitude: fifteen chosen men with spears were appointed to keep near his own person, in order to assist him in the dangerous service which he had reserv'd for himself: the artillery, consisting of two field pieces, and the cross-bowmen, were plac'd opposite to the avenue by which Atahualpa was to approach: the rest of the infantry were form'd in one body, under their respective officers; all

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 3. The Spanish writers are highly inconsistent, and even contradictory in their accounts of this interview, and all that relates to Atahualpa, whose memory they have attempted to stain with perfidy, in order to apologize for the cruelty of their countrymen.

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being commanded to keep within the square, and not to move till the signal for action was given *.

Nov. 16.

As soon as day appeared, the Peruvian camp was perceived to be in motion : but as Atahualpa was desirous of appearing with the greatest splendour and magnificence in his first interview with the strangers, the preparations for that purpose were so tedious, that the morning was far spent before he began his march ; and even then, the procession was so solemn and slow, that the Spaniards began to be uneasy, lest some suspicion of their treachery might be the cause of this uncommon delay. These apprehensions were increased by the dread of losing their booty, their avarice being whetted by the glittering appearance which the Peruvians made at a distance. This impatience made Pizarro send a messenger to the Inca, with fresh assurances of his friendly disposition, and notice that he waited his arrival. At length Atahualpa approached, preceded by four hundred men in an uniform dress, adorned with plates of gold and silver, and great abundance of precious stones. The Inca, sitting on a throne of burnished gold, adorned with plumes of various colours, was carried on the shoulders of his principal attendants. Behind came some great officers of his court, also carried in state. Several bands of singers and dancers completed the cavalcade ; and the whole plain was covered with troops, to the amount of thirty thousand men.

By way of prelude to the horrid scene that was to follow, as soon as the Inca entered the square in which the Spaniards had taken up their quarters, and where they had posted their troops, father Vincenti Valverde, chaplain to the expedition, advanced with a crucifix in one hand, and a breviary in the other, and in a long discourse explained to him the doctrine of creation, the fall of man, the incarnation, the sufferings, and resurrection of Jesus Christ ; the appointment of St. Peter as God's vicergerent on earth ; the transmission of his apostolic power by succession to the popes, and the donation made to the king of Castile by pope Alexander VI. of all the lands in the New World : in consequence of which he required Atahualpa to submit to Charles V. as his lawful sovereign, promising, if he would instantly comply with that requisition, embrace the Christian faith, and acknowledge the jurisdiction of the pope, that the Catholic king would protect his dominions, and permit him to continue in the exercise of his royal authority ; but if he should impiously refuse to obey this summons, he denounced war against him in his master's name, and threatened him with the most dreadful effects of his vengeance †.

A demand so bold, after the strongest assurances of friendship, filled Atahualpa with astonishment and indignation, while the account of its origin excited his contempt. He replied, however, with temper. " I should be glad," said he, " to be a friend to the Spanish monarch, who has sufficiently displayed his power by sending armies into such distant countries, but I disdain to be his

* Xerez, p. 194. Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 4.
Orib. lib. iii. c. 3. Robertson, Hist. America, book vi.

† Benzoni, Hist. Nov.

vassal : I owe no tribute to any mortal prince, and know none superior to myself. A foreign priest can have no right to dispose of my dominions. As to changing my religion," added he, "it would be equally foolish and impious in me, to abjure the worship received by my ancestors, until you have convinced me it is false, and that yours, which you would have me adopt in its stead, is true. You believe in a God that died upon a tree : I adore the Sun, who never dies." In regard to the creation, the fall of man, and other particulars in the harangue of the fanatical monk, as he had never heard of them before, and did not now understand them, he desired to know where his instructor had learned things so extraordinary. "In this book," replied Valverde, in an arrogant tone, presenting his breviary to him. The Inca seized it eagerly, examined it on all sides, and turning over the leaves, lifted it to his ear :—"This," said he, "tells me nothing ;"—and threw it on the ground with a disdainful smile. The enraged monk instantly ran towards his countrymen, crying out with great vehemence, "Vengeance, my friends, vengeance !—Christians, do you not see how the gospel is insulted ?—Kill those impious dogs, who trample under foot the law of God * !"

Pizarro, who had with difficulty restrained so long the fury of his soldiers, eager to seize the spoils and shed the blood of the Infidels, now gave the signal for executing the orders he had issued. At once the cannon and muskets fired, to the amazement and confusion of the Peruvians, who believed themselves in perfect safety ; the drums beat, the trumpets sounded, and the cavalry, sallying out by three several ways, fell with impetuosity upon the unresisting multitude, who thought of nothing but flight ; while the infantry rushed on with their swords and spears, making terrible slaughter of the fugitives. Meantime the general, at the head of his chosen band, advanced directly towards the Inca ; and after massacring the body of nobles, who surrounded the person of their sovereign, and who pressed forward with the most heroic loyalty to protect him from the sharpness of the Spanish weapons, at the expence of their own lives, Pizarro penetrated to the royal seat, seized Atahualpa by the arm, dragged him to the ground, and carried him prisoner to his quarters.

The consternation of the Peruvians on this event was inexpressible. Having no longer any object to attract their attention, or excite their zeal, they fled with precipitation towards every quarter ; while the Spaniards, with deliberate and unrelenting barbarity, continued to pursue and slaughter the wretched remains of a body of men, who had never once attempted any resistance. The carnage did not cease till the close of day, and was accompanied with circumstances of peculiar atrocity. Father Valverde during the whole massacre mingled with the soldiers, animating them in the bloody business, and calling to them to strike the infidels, "not with the edges, but with the points of their swords †." Above four thousand Peruvians were slain, without a single Spaniard being so much as wounded ; except Pizarro himself, who received a slight hurt in the hand from

* Benzoni, Hist. Nov. Orb. lib. iii. c. 3.

† Id. ibid.

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one of his own soldiers, while struggling to seize the Inca. The booty collected, by the plunder of the field, was rich beyond any idea which an European of that age could form of the wealth of the greatest monarch; and the Spaniards were so much transported with the value of the acquisition, and the greatness of their success, that, forgetting the sentiments natural to men who have unjustly, and unprovoked by any injury, shed the blood of their species, they spent the night in the most extravagant transports of joy, accompanied with dancing, drunkenness, and debauchery*.

The Peruvians were at first inconsolable, imagining their sovereign had been slain; but understanding that he was only a prisoner, above five thousand persons of distinction repaired to Caxamalca, to attend him in his confinement, and bear a part in his affliction. Nothing could be more moving than the fidelity and attachment with which they attended the captive monarch, endeavouring to break the poignancy of his grief, and pour comfort into his wounded bosom. But all their consolations were ineffectual. Atahualpa felt the misery of his condition, and sunk into a dejection proportioned to the height of grandeur whence he had fallen, and the suddenness of the transition, which for some time he could scarcely believe to be real. Afraid of losing all the advantages which he hoped to derive from the possession of the Inca's person, Pizarro laboured to console him with professions of friendship, and a respect that corresponded ill with his actions. In the course of these interviews Atahualpa discovered the ruling passion of the Spaniards, and attempted to avail himself of it, in order to procure his liberty. He took occasion to treat of his ransom, and offered such a quantity of treasure as astonished the Spaniards, even after all they had seen of the wealth of Peru. The apartment in which he was confined was twenty-two feet in length, and sixteen in breadth: he undertook to fill it with vessels of gold, as high as he could reach. Pizarro closed eagerly with this tempting proposal; and a line was drawn upon the walls of the chamber, in order to mark the stipulated height to which the treasure was to rise†.

Transported with having obtained some prospect of liberty, Atahualpa instantly took measures for fulfilling his part of the agreement, by sending officers to Cuzco, Quito, and other places where gold had been amassed in the greatest quantities, to bring what was necessary for completing his ransom immediately to Caxamalca. Every mandate issued by the Inca, though in the hands of his enemies, was executed with the greatest alacrity. Soothed with the hopes of obtaining their sovereign's liberty, and afraid of endangering his life, the Peruvians saw the palaces of their princes and the temples of their gods robbed of their most valuable ornaments without murmuring, or once attempting to take vengeance upon the authors of so many evils. The Spaniards remained unmolested at Caxamalca, while small detachments of their number marched into the most remote provinces, and entered the principal cities in the empire, without meeting with the smallest opposition. On the contrary, they were every where

* Benzoni, lib. iii. c. 3.

† Robertson, Hist. Americ. b. vi.

received with marks of the most submissive respect by the natives, who not only honoured the Inca's passport and commands, but considered the Spaniards as the messengers and ministers of some powerful divinity that, for certain purposes, brought affliction upon their sovereign *.

While the Spaniards were thus employed in collecting the Inca's ransom, intelligence was received, that Almagro was landed at St. Michael with a reinforcement of an hundred and fifty men. The arrival of this long expected succour, which enabled Pizarro to send out more considerable detachments than would otherwise have been consistent with his safety, was no less alarming to Atahualpa than agreeable to his oppressor. In proportion as the number of his enemies increased, he concluded they would rise in their demands, and consequently that he would find more difficulty in obtaining his liberty. To augment these disquieting apprehensions he was informed that the Spaniards sent to Cuzco had visited his brother Huascar in his confinement, and that the captive prince had represented his wrongs to them in the strongest light, and as an inducement to embrace his cause, had promised them a quantity of treasure vastly superior to what he had engaged to pay for his freedom. Seeing his destruction inevitable, if the Spaniards should listen to this proposal, he determined to sacrifice his brother's life, in order to save his own. But he durst not venture on such a measure, before he had sounded the sentiments of Pizarro relative to it: he therefore took occasion to tell him, that his officers had unadvisedly killed Huascar, a circumstance which gave him much uneasiness. Pizarro answered very unconcernedly, that it was the fortune of war for some to be killed, and others to be taken, and treated at the will of the conquerors. Satisfied with this reply, as far as it regarded his brother, Atahualpa ordered him to be instantly dispatched; and that, like his other commands, was executed with scrupulous punctuality †.

Having escaped this danger, Atahualpa fondly expected to be soon restored to his liberty, as great part of the treasure stipulated for his ransom was now amassed, and his subjects were daily bringing it in from different parts of his dominions. Pizarro was sensible that the whole would be collected in a short time; but either in compliance with the impatience of his soldiers, whose avarice was inflamed by seeing such heaps of gold continually exposed before their eyes, or in order that he might still have some pretext for retaining the Inca in custody, he ordered all that was already received to be melted down, except some pieces of curious workmanship, reserved as a present for the emperor Charles. The next thing that occupied the general's attention was the division of the booty, and in regard to that he was a good deal embarrassed. The soldiers who had come with Almagro demanded an equal share in the Inca's ransom, alledging that their arrival had forwarded the payment, and struck terror into the Peruvians, who otherwise might not have obeyed Atahualpa's commands. This request was considered as unreasonable; but, in order to appease them, Pizarro declared that an hundred thousand pesos should be set aside for their benefit. After deducting this sum, and the fifth

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* Zarate, lib. ii. c. 6.

† Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 5.

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due to the crown, there remained one million, five hundred and twenty-eight thousand five hundred pesos, to Pizarro and his followers *.

The festival of St. James, the patron saint of Spain, was the day chosen for the division of this vast sum; and the manner of conducting it strongly marks that strange alliance of religion and avarice, which forms so striking a feature in the character of the conquerors of the New World. Pizarro began the distribution of the spoils of an innocent people, procured by a violation of the most sacred promises, and at the expense of a torrent of blood, with solemnly imploring the divine assistance to enable him to do justice to every man †. The spirit of fanaticism only can occasion such inconsistencies in human conduct. In this distribution some regard was had to the merit of the soldiers; but all received a greater sum than ever fell to the share of private men engaged in military service. The dividends of Pizarro and his officers were made according to the dignity of their rank.

This excess of wealth was productive of numberless disorders, and threatened the conquerors with total ruin. Having now received a recompence for their services far beyond their most sanguine hopes, many of the soldiers were so impatient to retire from fatigue and danger, in order to spend the remainder of their days in their native country, in ease and opulence, that they demanded their discharge with clamorous importunity. This disposition ill suited the ambitious views of the commanders, and Almagro was for proceeding in the usual way to enforce obedience by the severity of military discipline, but Pizarro opposed him:—"Let them go," said he, "they cannot more effectually serve us. From such followers we could expect neither enterprise in action nor fortitude in suffering: if not mutinous and cowardly, we should at best have indifferent soldiers here: at home, and in the colonies, they will act for us as recruiting officers; for when it shall be seen that private soldiers of so little merit as they, have made such large fortunes, we shall not long want better men to supply their places." He accordingly granted leave to such soldiers as chose it to depart, and permitted above sixty of them to accompany his brother Ferdinand, whom he sent to Spain with an account of his success, and the emperor's share of the treasure ‡.

The Spaniards having thus divided among them the treasure collected for the Inca's ransom, that unfortunate prince urged them to fulfil their promise of setting him at liberty: but nothing was farther from the thoughts of Pizarro; who had only amused his captive with the prospect of freedom, in order to induce him to lend his authority towards collecting the wealth of his dominions §. This was his sole view in his compact with Atahualpa; and having now accomplished his aim, he no longer regarded his plighted faith. In vain did the Inca offer to lay himself under the strictest obligations to act in nothing contrary to the interest of the Spaniards; to acknowledge himself the vassal of the emperor Charles V. to pay a regular tribute, and to receive baptism, as soon as his understanding should be convinced: Pizarro was secretly forging a pretext for depriving him of his life, at the very time he hoped to be replaced on his throne.

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 6.
 † Id. ibid.
 ‡ Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 6. Garcilasso, lib. i. c. 38. § Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 6.

Many

Many circumstances conspired in prompting Pizarro to this action, one of the most criminal and atrocious that stains the Spanish name, amid all the deeds of violence committed in the conquest of the New World. The strict attention with which it was necessary to guard a prisoner of such importance, greatly increased the fatigue of military duty, and occasioned murmurs among the soldiers: the utility of keeping him longer appeared inconsiderable, and the inconveniences great: the breach of promise must excite universal indignation in the Peruvians, who would assuredly attempt their sovereign's release: the captive monarch himself would encourage his people in their hostile designs, when he found more gentle methods to fail: his death, which would throw all things into confusion, seemed essential to fix the Dominion of Spain over such an extent of country *. As a further motive, Almagro's soldiers were still dissatisfied at not receiving an equal share in the treasure, and refused to be led to the reduction of the provinces. They were apprehensive, that as long as Atahualpa remained a prisoner, Pizarro's soldiers would apply whatever treasure should be acquired, to make up what was wanting of the stipulated quantity for the Inca's ransom, and under that pretext exclude them from that proportional part of it to which they would be entitled by their services: they therefore insisted that the Inca should be put to death, that all the adventurers in Peru might thenceforth be on an equal footing; and on this they insisted as the condition of their obedience †.

Meanwhile the generals of Atahualpa, incensed at finding their prince still detained in custody, under frivolous pretences, proposed to set him at liberty by force of arms. To this proposition he very prudently refused his consent; admonishing them in the strongest terms not to have recourse to violence, which would endanger his life, and might occasion the total subversion of the monarchy. In obedience to him, they laid aside their designs; but the discontent which appeared in their countenances, excited suspicions in the breasts of the Spaniards, and Pizarro either was, or pretended to be alarmed, at some rumours of forces being assembling in the distant provinces of the empire. These fears and suspicions were artfully increased by Philipillo, one of the Peruvians whom Pizarro had carried to Spain, and who was now employed as interpreter. Having fixed his affections on one of Atahualpa's concubines, and seeing no prospect of gratifying his passion during the life of that prince, he artfully endeavoured to fill the ears of the Spaniards with accounts of his secret designs and preparations ‡.

The reasons furnished by all these different motives and machinations were surely sufficient to induce a person of so little principle as Pizarro to carry his design against the Inca's life into execution; but historians have mentioned a trivial circumstance, which is supposed to have hastened the fate of that unfortunate monarch. Atahualpa, during his confinement, had attached himself with particular affection to Ferdinand Pizarro and Hernando Soto, who being persons of better education, and more polished manners than the rough and illiterate adventurers

* Id. *ibid.*
lib. viii. c. 6.

† Zarate, lib. ii. c. 7. Garcilaf. lib. i. c. 7.

‡ Herrera, dec. III.

with whom they served, treated him with that respectful attention to which he was entitled by the high station from which he had fallen. Flattered by this voluntary homage from persons of such eminence, he delighted in their society, and held frequent and familiar conversations with them; but in the presence of the general, who was of an austere temper, he was uneasy and overawed. The mind naturally desires to relieve itself from its painful feelings: Atahualpa's dread soon mingled with contempt. Among all the European arts, he admired none so much as the power of conveying ideas by writing; and he had long deliberated with himself, whether he should regard it as a natural or acquired talent. In order to determine this point, he desired one of the soldiers who guarded him to write the name of God, which he had often heard mentioned, upon the nail of his thumb; then calling another soldier, he desired to know what these characters meant, and was answered "God." He called a third soldier, and to his astonishment, received the same answer: at length Pizarro entered; and on putting the question to him, he blushed, and with some confusion was obliged to acknowledge his ignorance. From that moment Atahualpa, whose mind eagerly laid hold of this circumstance to emerge from that abasement in which it had been sunk, considered the general as a mean person, less enlightened than his own soldiers. The same feelings which led him to seize upon this circumstance, deprived him of the caution necessary to conceal the sentiments with which the discovery inspired him. Mortified to be the object of a barbarian's scorn, Pizarro determined suddenly to remove the cause of his uneasiness, by a sacrifice which policy and resentment now equally conspired to demand*.

In order, however, to give some colour of justice to the violent action which he intended to commit, and that he might not stand singly responsible for it, Pizarro resolved to try the Inca with all the formalities observed in the criminal courts of Spain. The general himself, and Almagro, with two assistants were appointed judges, with full power to acquit or condemn: an attorney-general was selected to carry on the prosecution in the name of his Catholic majesty: counsellors were chosen to assist the prisoner in his defence; and clerks were ordained to record the proceedings of court. Before this strange tribunal, a charge still more extraordinary was exhibited. It consisted of various articles, many of which are truly absurd and ludicrous: that Atahualpa, though a bastard, had dispossessed the rightful owner of the throne, and usurped the regal power; that he had put his brother and lawful sovereign to death; that he was an idolater, and that he not only permitted, but commanded the offering of human sacrifices; that he had a great number of concubines; that since his imprisonment he had levied taxes and tributes, and wasted the royal treasures, which now belonged of right to the conquerors; and, lastly, that he had endeavoured to stir up factions and rebellions against the Spaniards, traitorously inciting his subjects to take up arms for his release.

* Garcilasso, lib. i. c. 38.

On these heads of accusation was the sovereign of a great empire tried by a set of banditti who had invaded his dominions. With respect to each of the articles witnesses were examined: but as they delivered their evidence in the Peruvian dialect, Philipillo had it in his power to give their words what turn best suited his malevolent intentions; and as the judges were predetermined in their opinion, the evidence was judged sufficient. Atahualpa was pronounced guilty, and condemned to be burnt alive. In vain did the Inca object, that his judges could take no legal cognizance of the death of his brother; that his taxes which he had levied, and the wars which he had carried on, were nothing to the Spaniards; and that as to the conspiracy mentioned in the impeachment, the accusation was utterly false and groundless. He called heaven and earth to witness the integrity with which he had discharged his engagements, and the perfidy of his accusers, and desired that he might be sent over to Spain to take his trial before the emperor; but little regard was paid to his remonstrances: pity never touched the heart of Pizarro. The trial was laid for confirmation before Valverde, who "warranted it to be just," and Atahualpa was instantly led to execution. To complete this scene of iniquity, and add to the bitterness of the last moments of the unhappy sufferer, the same person who had just ratified his doom, and was the chief instrument of all his misfortunes in one world, offered to open to him the gates of another, by converting him to the Christian faith. The most powerful argument which Valverde used was a promise to mitigate the punishment: the dread of death extorted from the trembling victim a desire of receiving baptism: the ceremony was performed by the accursed hands of the exulting monk; and Atahualpa, instead of being burnt, was strangled at the stake *!

CHAP. VIII.
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C H A P. IX.

Continuation of the Progress of the Spanish Arms in Peru and the neighbouring Countries, from the Execution of Atahualpa to the Murder of Pizarro.

THE death of Atahualpa, as Pizarro had foreseen, threw the Peruvian government into the utmost disorder. Ambitious men in different parts of the empire aspired to independent authority, and usurped jurisdiction to which they had no right; while the people, in several provinces, as if set free from the restraints of law, broke out into the wildest excesses. The very frame of the constitution seemed to be dissolved, and the Spaniards flattered themselves, that they should meet with no farther resistance in establishing their unjust dominion. But symptoms of returning union soon began to appear. The people of Cuzco,

* Zate, lib. ii. c. 7. Garcilasso, lib. i. c. 36, 37. Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 6.

and the adjacent country, proclaimed as Inca, Manco Capac, the legitimate brother of their late sovereign Huascar, and determined to support him with the last drop of their blood against the machinations and violences of their invaders.

Pizarro saw the storm that was gathering, and took the most effectual measure for diverting its force. He invested Toparpa, one of the sons of Atahualpa, with the ensigns of royalty, and caused all public business to be transacted in his name. The next step necessary to insure his own success, and counteract the designs of his enemies, was to gain possession of the capital, and suppress the opposite faction, before it had gathered sufficient strength to maintain the resolutions it had taken. He accordingly set out from Caxamalca, attended by the new Inca, after having spent seven months in that city; during which time he had received such considerable reinforcements, that he could now venture to penetrate into the interior part of the country. The fame of Atahualpa's ransom had operated as he foretold. No sooner did the soldiers, to whom he had given their discharge, reach Panama, and display their riches to the view of their astonished countrymen, than adventurers crowded from that and all the neighbouring settlements to Peru; and Pizarro began his march towards Cuzco at the head of five hundred men, after leaving a considerable garrison in St. Michael, under the command of Benalcazar*.

The Peruvians had assembled large bodies of troops, in order to oppose the progress of the Spaniards; and when Pizarro approached near the valley of Xauxa, advice was brought that a party of the enemy had occupied the passes, and seemed resolved to dispute his march. Advancing a few miles farther, the plain was seen covered with the Peruvian army; a sight rather formidable to the Spaniards, who consisted either of fresh levied troops, or men who had for many months been sunk in voluptuous tranquillity, and were now fatigued with their journey, and the prodigious rains which had lately fallen. Almagro led the van: he approached so near as to hear the enemy's revilings; when giving way to his indignation, he attacked them with great impetuosity, after having passed a rapid river, in defiance of all opposition. Nothing could withstand the Spanish cavalry: the Peruvians were confounded, broken, and defeated, before the rear could come to support the main body. They lost great numbers in the flight, and left behind a considerable quantity of gold and other booty†. In this valley, which he found to be large, fertile, and populous, Pizarro attempted to found a colony, which, notwithstanding all those advantages, was not permanent.

While the general was thus employed, Soto was detached with sixty horse, to make the best of his way to Cuzco; to clear the road for the remainder of the army, and discover the motions of the Peruvians. This officer, however, was soon convinced of the danger of the service to which he was appointed. Having received intelligence that a large body of the enemy had fortified themselves at

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. viii. c. 6.

† Herrera, dec. III. lib. ix. c. 4.

Curabaya, with a resolution to defend that pass, he became diffident of his own strength, and sent notice of his situation to Pizarro, desiring that the Inca might join him, as the presence of that prince might possibly secure the purpose of victory without the hazard : but Toparpa fell sick about this time, and died ; a circumstance which very much troubled Pizarro, as it deprived him of all hope of subjecting the Peruvians to the crown of Spain, under colour of supporting the lawful sovereign*.

Soto was now obliged to place his dependence entirely on his own conduct and the valour of his troops. The Peruvians had cut down a bridge over an exceeding rapid river, that divided them from the Spaniards : to ford it in the face of the enemy seemed impracticable ; but Soto, without regarding the violence of the stream, plunged in with his body of cavalry, and gained the opposite bank in spite of every obstruction. The Peruvians betook themselves to a precipitant flight, and Soto continued the pursuit, notwithstanding his orders to advance slowly ; saying, it would be folly and cowardice to adhere so literally to order, as to neglect seizing an important advantage which could not be foreseen when the orders were issued. He accordingly pursued his march along the great road of Chinahayso to the mountain of Beleacongo, seven leagues from Cuzco. Here that body of the enemy which he had formerly engaged, resolved to make a last effort ; having fortified a difficult pass, and taken every measure that seemed necessary to obstruct the progress of the Spaniards, or cut them off. It was shameful, they said, to suffer themselves to be driven like a herd of deer, before sixty strangers, whose hopes of success were chiefly founded on the pusillanimity of their antagonists. The present opportunity was favourable : they ought to strike the blow, while the Spanish horse were unable to act on account of the ruggedness of the country.

Soto could at this time have no reliance on receiving assistance from Pizarro, who was employed in reducing the Yuanas and Yoyas ; he therefore reposed his hopes solely in the vigour and celerity of his motions, deeming it not impossible to repulse the enemy, by attacking them before they had completed their works, or were joined by fresh troops. His resolution, however, was staggered as he advanced. The whole face of the mountain seemed covered with armed men, and unexpected difficulties occurred with regard to the nature of the pass. As a farther discouragement, the Peruvians began to pour in their darts and arrows upon the Spaniards with more regularity than usual. This produced murmurs and discontents among the soldiers. But Soto, at once to quiet these, told them, That it was now necessary to conquer or die : the numbers of the enemy cut off all possibility of retreating, without being exposed to the most imminent danger, accompanied with disgrace ; and if they hesitated a moment, the same difficulty would attend their advancing, new levies being continually joining the Peruvian army. One victory more, he said, would remove every obstacle ; and the same valour which had hitherto proved invincible would now also insure success, if they would exert it as became true Castilians. This speech infused new life and

* Id. *ibid.*

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spirit into the troops : they advanced up the hill with undaunted resolution, amid showers of the enemy's weapons ; cut their way through the narrow pass ; and at last reached the summit of the mountain, in spite of all opposition. Five soldiers and two horses were killed in the attack, and eleven men and fourteen horses wounded*.

This loss was considerable, out of so small a body of men, yet would it have been a cheap price for victory, had it been complete. But the Peruvians still maintained their ground ; and Soto must have been under the necessity of renewing the combat next morning, had not Almagro seasonably arrived with a reinforcement. Dejected at seeing the number of their enemies augmented at a time when they were preparing for signal vengeance, and hoped to destroy them to a man, the Peruvians made but a feeble resistance against the united forces of the two commanders. Pizarro soon after joined them, and the whole Spanish army marched without further opposition to Cuzco, of which they took quiet possession. The booty found in that capital, after all that the natives had carried off and concealed, exceeded in value what had been received as Atahualpa's ransom. But as the Spaniards were now more accustomed to the wealth of the country, it did not excite the same surprise. It was not, however, collected with less avidity. The Spanish soldiers immediately set to work in stripping the gold and silver from the walls of the temples, in digging up the vessels of the same precious metals concealed in the graves, or buried with the dead, and in plundering the shrines of the idols†.

Pizarro no sooner found himself in possession of the capital of Peru, than he presently invited the people to return to their dwellings. Many accepted of the invitation ; and even the Inca, Manco Capac, resolved to visit Pizarro in person, and acknowledge the sovereignty of his Catholic majesty, on condition that neither he nor his subjects should, for the future, be molested in their persons or properties. Against this measure his council strongly remonstrated, admonishing him not to confide in the treacherous Spaniards, who had cruelly put his brother to death, in breach of the most solemn engagements. They could not, however, divert him from his purpose, as he understood Pizarro had declared him the rightful heir of the monarchy. " Can we imagine," said he, " that the Spaniards will divest us of our lawful inheritance, who never did them any injury ; who, instead of opposing their entrance, actually resigned every thing upon their summons?—Let us go in a peaceable manner ; for if we are armed, they will suspect our intentions are hostile, and will make that a pretext for refusing our just demand. Avarice lays hold of the slightest occasion to gratify its rapacity. Instead of our arms, let us carry such presents with us, as may serve to win the affections of covetous men, and pacify the displeasure of offended gods : let us collect all the gold, and silver, and precious stones in our power, and by this offering of our wealth take away the temptation to injustice and oppression.

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. ix. c. 4.

† Gomara, c. 123.

"It is true, the ancient power of our kings is fallen, but still let us maintain their integrity, honour, and prudence; and if this shall not prevail with the Spaniards to restore to us our empire, we may then absolutely conclude, that the prophecy of the Inca, our father and predecessor, is accomplished; that our monarchy is to be translated to strangers, our political government destroyed, and our reign abolished. If the Pachacama has ordered these things, what have we to do but to submit?—Let the Spaniards act as they please, it becomes us to pursue the maxims of reason and justice*."

This speech was pronounced with great pathos and energy, and drew tears from the whole assembly. The Peruvian nobles lamented the approaching destruction of the empire, but prepared to obey their prince, by providing every thing necessary for his journey. When all things were in readiness, he set out for Cuzco, attended by a great number of vassals, officers of his army, great lords of his household, and other dependents. His courtiers advised that he might be carried in the state-chair, which was made of pure gold, and wear on his temples the coloured wreath, peculiar to the Incas; but he replied, that these badges of royalty ill became a petitioner, and therefore desired to be carried on a common litter. He was met by the Spaniards, who had information of his design, at some distance from the city. Pizarro received him with the strongest marks of respect and reverence, and caused him to be crowned, and invested with the imperial ensigns, in the Cassona or royal palace, with all the solemnity and ceremonies observed by the Peruvians on the inauguration of their sovereigns. A treaty favourable to both parties was concluded, the articles of which need not here be specified, as it was soon broken and disregarded.

These pacific measures were pursued, because it was known, that forces were assembling both in the southern and northern provinces, under the generals Yrurumavi and Quizquiz; and also, because Pizarro had formed a plan of settling colonies and founding cities upon the coast, which he could not execute until the public commotions were subsided. The latter of these generals, incensed at the concessions made by the Inca, and the power assumed by a few hundreds of strangers in the centre of the empire, and in the very heart of the capital, collected a great army, in hopes of expelling them from Peru, and of recovering the ancient dignity and independency of the monarchy. He harangued his people with great vehemence; laid before them the shameful usurpation of the Spaniards; the disgraceful timidity of the Inca; the danger that threatened their religion, laws, lives and properties; the dreadful carnage already made by the Spaniards; their insatiable avarice and rapacity, with every other circumstance that could rouse, inflame, or animate men in such a situation. When he found he had excited a spirit of revenge among his followers, he advanced with a resolution to attack Cuzco. Pizarro and Almagro, having information of his designs, marched out to meet him at the head of a select body of horse and foot. They came up with the enemy at the bridge of Aparima; and by the vigour of their

* Garcilasso, lib. ii.

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first charge put the Peruvians in confusion: they were never after able to rally, but were slaughtered in heaps, almost without resistance. Soto continued the pursuit as far as Prileus, while Pizarro returned triumphant to Cuzco, in full expectation that the enemy would not venture a second time to dispute the capital with the Spaniards, without the authority of the Inca. But in that he was mistaken. Quizquiz was disconcerted, but not discouraged by his defeat: he suddenly assembled a new army, and again advanced towards Cuzco, in hopes of surprising the Spaniards; but Pizarro having intelligence of his approach, entirely disconcerted his measures. He drew out his troops into the neighbouring plain, where the cavalry might have room to act in conjunction with the foot. Another battle was fought with the same fortune. Quizquiz desisted from his purpose, and Pizarro had leisure to pursue his design of founding colonies on the sea coast*.

While these things were transacting in Cuzco and its neighbourhood, Benalcazar, governor of St. Michael was not idle. Having received from Panama and Nicaragua a considerable body of recruits, allured by the fame of the immense wealth of Peru, and being naturally of a warlike and enterprising temper, he resolved to profit by his strength; to enlarge his stock of riches by fresh acquisitions; to rival the glory of other commanders; and by striking some blow, equally important and unexpected, to have his name distinguished among the conquerors of the New World. The reduction of Quito, where, according to the report of the natives, Atahualpa had left the greater part of his treasure, was the enterprise on which Benalcazar had set his heart; and he contrived matters with so much address, that the council of St. Michael proposed, that he should undertake the expedition. He was not long in complying with the inclinations of the magistrates. Leaving a sufficient force to protect the infant settlement, he placed himself at the head of an hundred and forty horse and foot, well armed, and marched towards Carrachabamba, one of the interior provinces. Before he reached Zeropalta, he suffered incredible hardships. The news of his progress soon reached Quito; on which it is supposed that the inhabitants took measures to conceal their wealth, in order to disappoint the Spaniards, whose avarice they detested. They also assembled forces to oppose their progress, under Yrurimavi, one of the imperial generals, who represented in the strongest light the danger that threatened them.

The first step taken by this commander was to dispatch a body of troops to watch the motions of the Spaniards, in the neighbourhood of Zeropalta. Without knowing any thing of this matter Benalcazar was advancing with thirty horse towards Tombebamba, when he met the Peruvian detachment on the road, and obliged it to retire with precipitation to the main body. Benalcazar resided eight days at Tombebamba, in the course of which he received ambassadors from the people of the provinces called Canaries, desiring an alliance with the Spaniards, in order to revenge the cruelties committed by the friends of Atahualpa, in their

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. i. c. 3. 4.

country, during the late civil commotions. Their request was readily granted, and Benalcazar exhorted them to raise forces immediately, in order to assist in the designs formed against Quito. Advice of these particulars was soon carried to that city; where, after consulting their oracles, offering sacrifices, and praying to be delivered from perpetual slavery and destruction, it was agreed in council, by the commanders and priests, to raise an army of fifty thousand men, and vigorously to oppose the enemy.

Meanwhile Benalcazar was no less diligent and active. He detached Ruyz de Diaz with a party of horse to gain information of the country, and reconnoitre the enemy's disposition. This party was soon attacked, and surrounded by a body of the enemy placed in ambush by Yruminavi. The Spaniards fought with great resolution, and made dreadful carnage; but they must at last have sunk under the weight of superior numbers, had not one of the soldiers, by an extraordinary effort, broke through the Peruvians, and carried advice to Benalcazar of the danger of Diaz and his detachment. Leaving a small body for the defence of his quarters, Benalcazar hastened to the assistance of this brave officer, whom he found gallantly fighting amid heaps of slaughtered Peruvians. But the enemy were neither discouraged by their loss, nor by the arrival of Benalcazar: on the contrary, their fury was exalted; they redoubled their exertions, and appeared determined to perish or to conquer. Fatigue and the approach of evening, however, obliged the combatants at last to separate, as if by mutual consent; the Peruvians all the while denouncing vengeance, and boasting that the Spaniards would find a different kind of resistance in their approaches to Quito, from what they had met with at Caxamalca.

Benalcazar, who, in this battle, had acted the part of an able commander as well as of a brave soldier, spent part of the night in refreshing his troops, while the enemy were employed in making such fortifications as they thought would be sufficient to enable them to resist the power of the Spaniards. Of this Benalcazar had notice; and as the obstinate courage which the Peruvians had shewn in the late engagement left him little hope that he should be able to force their entrenchments, he resolved to try the effects of policy, and while the darkness of night concealed his motions, to take the route of Chima and Turbas. An Indian offered to be his guide, and to conduct him by a safe road, through which he should entirely elude the enemy; but scarce had he marched a league, when he was overtaken, and attacked in the rear by the whole body of the Peruvian army. At the same time Yruminavi had detached a body of men to occupy the passes, and dig pits, which he ordered to be covered with grass, as traps for the cavalry. The action was sustained in the rear by thirty horse, while Benalcazar, with the rest of the troops, struggled hard to gain a neighbouring eminence. This he accomplished after much difficulty, and then sent assistance to the cavalry in the rear. There the battle raged for some time; but at length the enemy, concluding that the pits ordered to be dug were finished, drew off, and wheeled with great velocity to the front. The consequences of this stratagem must have proved very fatal to the Spaniards, had it not been discovered by a deserter to Benalcazar,

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cazar, who immediately resolved to quit the direct road, and pursue his march over the top of some steep hills.

When the Peruvians observed this movement, they were much dispirited and disconcerted, not doubting but the Spaniards were protected by some divinity, who revealed all the stratagems contrived against them. They insisted that their general should make immediate proposals of peace; but Yrruminaui laboured to convince them, that it was better to perish, like brave men, with their swords in their hands, than to become the slavish dependents, on an insolent, cruel, and rapacious enemy, who paid no regard to the most solemn engagements, but wantonly violated the rights of religion, the faith of treaties, and the ties of humanity. Their resentment was again roused by his eloquence, and they marched in pursuit of the Spaniards; but Benalcazar arrived safe at the stately palace of Riobamba, before the enemy came up with him. Thence he sallied out with thirty horse, and obliged the Peruvians to fly for shelter to the mountains. They again, however, came down at the persuasion of their general, and seemed determined to dispute every inch of the road to Quito.

After resting twelve days at Riobamba, Benalcazar resumed his march, and was joined in a short time by a body of his new allies the Canaries, who congratulated him very cordially on his late victories, and assured him of their endeavours to render the issue of the expedition as fortunate as the beginning. They were averse to all pacific overtures; but the Spanish general, that he might have nothing to reproach himself with, in case of any untoward accident, made very equitable proposals to the Peruvians. They were rejected, however, with scorn, by Yrruminaui, who now occupied the banks of a river over which the Spaniards had to pass. From that post he was driven with great slaughter. But the Spaniards, though always successful, were exhausted with continual fighting: Benalcazar, therefore, sent an Indian with a cross in his hand to endeavour to procure a cessation of hostilities. Many of the Peruvians were ready to embrace the overture, when Yrruminaui again interposed, and by his inflammatory eloquence revived the dying sparks of resentment and vengeance. They all resolved to die rather than submit to the Spaniards: they honoured their leader with the title of Atundapo, or great lord; and in the first transports of their fury, they murdered the messenger, and broke in pieces the cross*.

The Peruvians to a man were now bent on opposing the advances of the Spaniards to Quito. They made perpetual attacks, and kept Benalcazar in alarm night and day, though they were not able to obstruct his progress till he came to a pass near that city, which they had fortified with all the skill they possessed in the military art. Several deep trenches had there been dug, and divers little bastions filled with archers, were erected; but the hope of possessing the immense riches, said to be contained in the capital of the province, so inflamed the minds of the Spaniards, that they pushed the attack with more than human valour; carried all the works at the first assault, and obliged the enemy

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. x. c. 5.

to take shelter in Quito. Convinced that he could not maintain his ground in that city, Yrruminavi used his utmost influence with the inhabitants to retire to the mountains, and there watch the first favourable opportunity of attacking the enemy, when lulled in security and intoxicated with prosperity. They in general obeyed his advice: three hundred families, however, having resolved to rely on the humanity of the conquerors, so great was his detestation of the Spaniards, and his dread that his countrymen might be induced to submit to their yoke, that he ordered all those innocent people to be massacred, and their houses levelled with the ground! In consequence of this retreat, Benalcazar was permitted to enter Quito without opposition, with his victorious army. But there, to the inexpressible grief and disappointment of the soldiers, after all the dangers and fatigues they had undergone, none of the vast treasure of which fame had spoke so loudly was to be found; and on the strictest inquiry among the natives, no other answer could be obtained, but that Yrruminavi had concealed it in some place unknown to them, and that great riches were carried off by the families who had fled to the mountains*.

But Benalcazar's expedition was by no means void of advantage, though he was disappointed in regard to its principal object. It broke the power of the Peruvians in a quarter where it was most formidable, and established the jurisdiction of Pizarro over a province where it would otherwise have been disputed by a dangerous invader, also allured by the fame of the treasures of Quito. Pedro de Alvarado, who had distinguished himself so eminently in the conquest of Mexico, and who had obtained the government of Guatemala as a reward for his services, was induced by the report of the inexhaustible wealth of Peru to equip an armament for invading that empire, contrary to the express privileges granted to Pizarro and Almagro. He had with regret beheld himself second to Cortez in the former expedition; but he hoped to render himself equal, if not superior to Pizarro in the second: and to his own experience in the art of war he joined the assistance of some of the best officers and most approved soldiers of the age. The purpose of the expedition, and the high reputation of the commander, made volunteers resort to his standard from every quarter. He embarked with five hundred men, of whom upwards of two hundred were of such distinction as to serve on horseback, and after sailing thirty days, arrived off Cape St. Francis, when perceiving his soldiers sickly, and the horses afflicted with such diseases as would render them unfit for service, he landed in the bay of Caragues, harangued his troops, nominated his officers, and sent the provisions by sea to Puerto Viejo, while the army marched thither by land; the pilot being ordered, at the same time, to sail along the coast of Peru, to the extremity of Pizarro's government, to make the necessary charts, observe the soundings and harbours, and set up marks of taking formal possession of the country†.

From this circumstance it should seem, that Alvarado had no direct purpose of invading the jurisdiction of Pizarro; but the exaggerated accounts which he re-

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. i. c. 3. Zarate, lib. ii. c. 9.
lib. i. c. 1.

† Herrera, dec. IV.

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received at Puerto Viejo of the incredible wealth of Quito so much inflamed the avarice of his troops, that he was obliged to undertake an expedition against that city, in order to gratify them. He accordingly attempted to march immediately thither by following the course of the river Quayquil, and crossing the ridge of the Andes towards its head. But in this tedious and perilous route, one of the most impracticable in all America, his troops suffered so much from famine and fatigue, that great part of them perished, before he reached the plain of Quito; and there to his astonishment, he met a body, not of Indians but of Spaniards, drawn up in hostile array against him.

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Pizarro having received intelligence of Alvarado's armament, and its destination, had detached Almagro with a considerable force to oppose this formidable invader of his jurisdiction. Almagro was joined by Benalcazar and his victorious party, before the arrival of Alvarado; who, discouraged by the hardships he had already sustained, and sensible of the danger to which he was exposed, in the present exhausted state of his troops, was persuaded to listen to terms of accommodation. It was accordingly stipulated, at an interview with Almagro in Riobamba, that Alvarado should leave such of his men as chose to remain in Peru, and return to his own government, on receiving an hundred thousand pesos to defray the expence of his armament*. The greater part of his troops entered into the service of Pizarro; who was thus strengthened, by an invasion which threatened his ruin.

Soon after this fortunate event, advice was received of the safe arrival, and successful negociation of Ferdinand Pizarro, in Spain. The immense quantity of treasure which he imported, filled not only that kingdom, but all Europe with astonishment. He was received by the emperor with the attention due to the bearer of a present so rich as to exceed any idea that the Spanish court had yet formed concerning the wealth of the New World. His brother Francis was created Marquis of Atabilos; his authority, as governor of Peru, was confirmed, with new powers and privileges, and the addition of seventy leagues, extending along the coast to the southward of the territory granted in his former patent. On Almagro was bestowed the title of Adelantado, with jurisdiction over two hundred leagues of country, under the name of New Toledo, stretching beyond the southern limits of the province allotted to Pizarro, then called New Castile. Ferdinand himself was admitted into the military order of St. Jago; was universally caressed; and many persons of distinction prepared to accompany him to Peru, instead of engaging in the wars of Italy, where nothing was to be earned but honours†.

On receiving intelligence that he had obtained the royal grant of an independent government, Almagro attempted to make himself master of Cuzco from a persuasion that it lay within his boundaries. Juan and Gonzalo Pizarro prepared to oppose him: both parties were supported by powerful adherents, and

* *Id. ibid.* Zarate, lib. ii. c. 10.
lib. iii. c. 3.

† *Herrera, dec. IV. lib. i. c. 5.* Zarate,





the dispute was on the point of being terminated by the sword, when the general himself arrived in the capital. This fortunate circumstance prevented, at that time, an open rupture. By a judicious mixture of firmness and flexibility, which he manifested in his remonstrances with Almagro and his partizans, Pizarro made such an impression on their minds as brought about a fresh reconciliation. All the articles in their original contract were confirmed with the same sacred solemnities as formerly; and it was agreed that Almagro should attempt the conquest of Chili, which assuredly lay within his grant, and was supposed to be a country no less rich than Peru.

As soon as this dispute was settled Pizarro marched back to the countries on the sea coast, and as every thing was now in tranquillity, he applied himself with that persevering ardour which distinguishes his character, to introduce a form of regular government into the extensive provinces subject to his jurisdiction. He distributed the country into various districts: he appointed proper magistrates to preside in each; and ill qualified as he may seem by his education or habits of life for such a task, he established many judicious regulations concerning the administration of justice, the collection of the royal revenue, the working of the mines, and the treatment of the Indians. He also founded the city of Lima, which he destined to be the capital of his government, on the banks of a small river, that runs through a valley of the same name with the settlement, six miles distant from Calloa, the most commodious harbour in the South Sea; and under his inspection, the buildings advanced with such rapidity, that Lima soon assumed the form of a city, and gave even in its infancy some presages of its future grandeur†.

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While Pizarro was thus employed, Almagro was prosecuting his expedition to Chili. Before he set out, he desired the Inca to appoint two Peruvians of distinction to accompany him, in order to dispose the minds of the natives for the reception of the Spanish forces. In consequence of this request, Manco Capac ordered his brother Topa, and the high priest Vilehoma to execute that commission; persons whose exalted dignity would not only give them consequence with the Indians, but whose absence from Cuzco would remove all grounds of jealousy from the Spaniards, the high priest being of an intriguing and turbulent disposition. Almagro, whose courage and liberality endeared him to the soldiers, was attended in this expedition by five hundred and seventy Spaniards, and a great number of Indians, both for burden and war. That all his followers might be properly furnished with necessaries, he lent them what money they required, taking only their notes for the repayment of it out of the booty which should be acquired by the enterprise. During a tedious march of two hundred leagues, he was well accommodated by the natives, who paid the greatest regard to the Inca's command, and supplied the soldiers with abundance of provisions; but on reaching the barren country of Charcas, fatigue and hunger produced discontent among the troops, which determined Almagro to proceed immediately to Chili. The auxiliary Indians in his army remonstrated on the danger and dif-

† Herrera, dec. IV. lib. ii. c. 1. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. vi.

difficulty of the design ; acquainting him, that the journey must be pursued either over the high mountains of the Andes, which at that season were covered with snow, and so intensely cold that no Indian could support the rigour of the climate, or through a sandy desert along the coast, where the excessive heat of the sun beams, reflected from the sand, and the want of water would hazard the entire destruction of the army. These difficulties, however, were not sufficient to check the ardour of Almagro, inflamed by the exaggerated accounts of the riches of the country he was preparing to invade. He chose to climb the Andes, as a shorter route, and more agreeable to the constitution of his Spanish troops ; but he was soon convinced of the rashness of the attempt. The cold was so intense, that the greater part of the Indians, and one hundred and fifty Spaniards perished in those dreadful mountains, and many of the survivors lost the use of their fingers and toes. At last the adelantado with the remainder of his army, having conquered every difficulty which cold, fatigue, and famine could throw in their way, reached the fertile plains of Chili, where they were hospitably entertained by the benevolent natives, and forgot their past miseries in the hopes of pillaging their benefactors.

During his stay in this terrestrial paradise, Almagro received so many rich presents as induced him to cancel the notes of his soldiers, and confirmed all the accounts he had received of the wealth of the country. He congratulated himself on the valuable grant made to him by the court, and determined immediately to subdue the provinces of Purrumanca, Antielli, Pinca, Conqui, and other interior countries, which did not acknowledge the authority of the Inca. With this view, he recommended to prince Topa, to assemble as many Indians as possible, in order to support the Spaniards, and with the united forces he advanced towards the southern extremity of Chili. In his march, he had several sharp encounters with the natives, whom he found very different from the people of Peru, both in their spirit and bodily constitution. Intrepid, hardy, and independent, they disputed every inch of ground with obstinacy, and advanced to the attack with more determined fierceness, than the Spaniards had hitherto discovered in any American nation. Almagro, however, continued to penetrate into the country, and had subdued several provinces, when his thoughts were suddenly turned towards another quarter.

Ferdinand Pizarro was by this time returned to Peru, and an officer who arrived with a reinforcement to Almagro, brought him the emperor's commission appointing him governor of New Toledo, and defining the limits of his jurisdiction. By that commission it appeared incontestible, that Cuzco lay within the limits of the adelantado's government. On this discovery, so propitious to his wishes, and which confirmed the justice of his former claim, Almagro resolved, by the advice of his officers, to return immediately to Peru, and wrest the seat of his power out of the hands of the Pizarros, hoping that the southern provinces would submit when once he should be in possession of the capital. As the soldiers had not yet forgot their sufferings, from cold and famine, on the summits of the Andes, he now determined to march through the sandy plains along the coast, where he

hardly suffered less from heat and drought, calamities of a different kind, notwithstanding all his attention to provide a supply of water, by ordering it to be carried in leather bottles on the backs of the Indians. No sooner had he passed the desert, than he received intelligence which made him hasten his march, and convinced him of the propriety of the measure he had taken: he was informed that the Peruvians were in arms, from one end of the empire to the other, and that they were on the point of recovering possession of Cuzco, which the Inca had long besieged, at the head of a large body of his best troops*.

A variety of causes contributed to rouse the Peruvians to an attempt to free themselves from the yoke of their oppressors. The chief of these was the dilatoriness of Pizarro to execute the articles of agreement with the Inca, to reinstate him in his throne and authority. On this head Manco Capac made frequent remonstrances, but was always amused with fresh excuses and pretexts. He had sufficient penetration to dive into the bottom of such conduct; and perceiving that the Spaniards not only evaded the performance of their engagements, but that he would be detained a prisoner, in case he refused submission to whatever Pizarro thought fit to propose, he dissembled his resentment, and waited patiently for an opportunity to make his escape, and rouse his subjects to arms. After several unsuccessful attempts for this purpose, the avarice of the Spaniards enabled him to complete his design.

Ferdinand Pizarro, during his negotiation in Spain, had promised the emperor a large remittance from Peru, besides all the treasure he had carried, in return for the honours and grants conferred upon his family. The general, however, was of opinion, that he had already sufficiently paid for all the imperial favours, and that he and his soldiers were justly entitled to the remaining wealth, as the reward of their toils and sufferings: he therefore told his brother, when informed of his promise to the emperor, that he had conquered Peru at his own expence, without any assistance from the court; that he had already remitted a vast sum of money; that Peru was now drained of its superfluous treasure, the remainder being employed in building cities, planting colonies, and other establishments to secure the conquest; all which would redound in time to the honour of the crown, and the interest of the government, but that it was sufficient, at present, for the infant settlements to maintain themselves. These he knew to be the sentiments of his people in general, and was not willing to displease them by an unseasonable contribution; but as his brother Ferdinand continued to urge him on the subject, he imprudently conferred on him the government of Cuzco, in order to get free from his importunities, without laying him under any restrictions in regard to the raising of money.

Ferdinand immediately took possession of his government, with a full resolution to make good his engagements to the court, whatever might be the consequence. As a first expedient, he offered to restore the Inca to his dignity, provided a present of sufficient value was made to the king of Spain, whose

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. ii. c. i. lib. iii. c. i. lib. iv. c. i. Zarate, lib. iii. c. i.

necessities made such a stipulation necessary; and the better to convince him of the sincerity of his intentions, he removed that unfortunate prince to the royal palace, and ordered him to be treated with all the honours due to the sovereign of Peru. The deceit took: the Inca, persuaded that he should regain his lost authority, dispatched expresses to every corner of his dominions, requesting the Curacas to bring the usual tribute of gold and silver, as the only means of delivering him out of the hands of the Spaniards. The tribute arrived, and a very rich present was made by the Inca to the governor. But Ferdinand, instead of performing his promise, repeated his assurances; a behaviour which awakened Manco Capac to a perfect sense of his own danger, and the little dependance to be placed in the engagements of a perfidious nation that sacrificed every other consideration to the thirst of gold. He beheld with contempt the honours that were paid him, while all the gates of the palace were secured by Spanish soldiers; and conjectured very naturally, that he might be doomed to share the fate of Atahualpa, when his treasures being drained, he should be unable to purchase the longer duration of his existence. His fears set his imagination at work, how to escape out of confinement, and his knowledge of the character of the Spaniards, directed him to a stratagem which answered his purpose. He told Ferdinand Pizarro, that in the valley of Yucaya, where the Incas were interred, there were several rich tombs, and in one of them a statue of gold of an ancient Inca, as large as the life, which he was persuaded he could find, if he were allowed to go in search of it with his usual guard of Spaniards. The proposal was eagerly embraced, and the Inca was dispatched to rake up the dust of his ancestors. He had informed some of his officers of his intention, and an army was assembled in the neighbouring mountains, in order to attempt his rescue; but he saved his troops that danger, by artfully making his escape and joining them*.

No sooner did Manco Capac find himself at liberty, than he concerted the destruction of those perfidious strangers, who had not only usurped his authority, kept his person in bondage, tyrannized over his subjects, and drained his kingdom of its wealth, but violated every obligation, divine and human, from an insatiable thirst of gold, and an ungovernable lust of dominion. He summoned an assembly of all the great officers of state, of his generals, and principal nobility, and laid before them what they knew too well, his own wretched condition, and that of his subjects, together with the cruelty and rapacity of the Spaniards. He had early suspicion, he said, of the treachery and ambition of those strangers, by their dividing the lands of Peru among themselves, enslaving those who were born free, and putting the natives to the torture, in order to extort a confession where the treasures of the great were deposited. He apologized for sitting a tame spectator of these enormities, by alledging, that he only waited an opportunity of making his escape, in order to revenge the injuries he had suffered, and assert the rights of his crown and country. He could no longer, he added, regard those Spaniards as the descendants of Virachoca, but as vile impostors, who committed

* Gomara, c. 135. Zarate lib. iii. c. 3. Herrera, dec. IV. lib. ii. c. 3.

the most horrid crimes under the mask of religion, and had impiously taken upon themselves the sacred character of messengers of the great Pachacama, while they were perpetrating every villainy: he was therefore now determined to punish their wickedness, and vindicate the liberties of his people by force of arms. For this purpose, he called upon every man, in whose breast the least spark of patriotism existed, that the war might be vigorously carried on against the ungrateful strangers, whose expulsion was equally necessary to their security as individuals and as a people, and essential to the enjoyment of their religion and laws.

Manco Capac used many other arguments to rouse his subjects to arms, and delivered himself with so much spirit and energy, that all present were wound up to a kind of madness, and called out for vengeance in the most tumultuous transports of fury. As soon as order could be restored, the assembly deliberated on the means of conducting a war, in regard to the propriety of which all were unanimous. It was resolved to dispatch messengers to the chief men in every part of the empire, requesting them to raise all the troops in their power with the greatest secrecy; to unite at a time and place appointed, and at one blow to overwhelm the Spaniards in their quarters. Agreeable to this resolution it was concerted, that three armies should be formed: one to fall upon Almagro, another to attack Lima, and a third, under the command of the Inca in person, to surprise, or if that attempt failed, to invest Cuzco, and wrest the capital out of the hands of the invaders.

All these resolutions were executed with the most astonishing celerity; and the Spaniards in Cuzco saw themselves surrounded by an incredible multitude of enemies, before they had any suspicion of the revolt. The attack began in the night, accompanied with the shouts of the Peruvians, and the hoarse sound of their warlike instruments; and such was the fury of the assailants, that they shot fired arrows, and set the city in flames in different places, being determined to destroy the Spaniards, at the expence of reducing the capital of the empire to ashes. Their reverence for the temple of the Sun, the convent of sacred virgins, and a few other religious houses, made them abstain, however, from firing the streets in that neighbourhood, in consequence of which the Spaniards were left in possession of the great square, and as much of the city as could be defended by a small garrison of an hundred and seventy men. These behaved with the most heroic gallantry; but all their efforts must have proved ineffectual, had they not found means to engage the Peruvian slaves in their interest by a promise of freedom. By this accession of strength, they were enabled to sustain a siege of upwards of nine months; and at last they recovered entire possession of the capital, though not without the loss of several persons of distinction, among whom was Juan Pizarro, the best beloved of all the brothers*.

Meanwhile the marquis, Francis Pizarro, remained at Lima. The first suspicion which he had of the general insurrection arose from the interruption in his correspondence with the capital. Soon after he received such information as con-

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. ii. c. 3.

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firmed his fears; and not doubting but all the Spaniards in Cuzco had already perished, he applied himself with the utmost diligence to provide for the safety of Lima, and the other settlements. For this purpose he sent messengers to Panama, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Hispaniola, to solicit reinforcements, in order to prevent the entire loss of Peru, the most valuable of all the Spanish conquests in America. He recalled all the detachments sent into different provinces, and commanded a body of an hundred horse and foot to march with all possible expedition towards Cuzco, in order to succour the garrison, if still existing, and at an event to procure more exact information of the state of affairs at that quarter. The army destined for the attack of Lima had notice of these proceedings, and determined to cut off the detachment sent to Cuzco, the reduction of the capital being the main object of the designs of Manco Capac. With this view they took post in all the narrow passes and difficult defiles, through which the detachment was to march; and when they found their opportunity, at a pass in the mountains of Parcos, they fell upon the Spaniards with the utmost fury; tumbled down great stones and pieces of rock from the higher grounds, and plied them so hard with their darts and arrows, that not a man of the whole party escaped. In a manner nearly similar they cut off several other detachments that were on their way to Lima, in consequence of the orders of the marquis. Gonzaló de Topia, with sixty horse and seventy foot, perished; Morgovego de Quinanes, with an equal number of men, met a like fate; and Alonso de Galeata, at the head of forty horse and sixty foot, shared in the general destruction. On the whole, above four hundred Spaniards, marching to succour Lima, were slaughtered in the field, and nearly an equal number were killed in the mines in different provinces, where they imagined themselves in perfect security*.

The Spanish writers exclaim loudly against the barbarities exercised by the Peruvians on these occasions; but, from their own accounts, nothing appears, besides the just retribution of an highly injured and enraged enemy. Great numbers of rapacious adventurers had flocked from the different Spanish settlements on the continent of America, as well as from those in the neighbouring islands, in hopes of sharing in the spoils of Peru; and as they were strangers to regular industry, they diffused themselves carelessly in quest of mines or pillage, little imagining that the natives, who had submitted tamely to the usurpation of Pizarro, when supported only by an handful of men, would now venture to throw off the yoke, when every province was filled with Spaniards, and the Inca in their power. This security proved their ruin, and had almost occasioned the entire loss of the rich country which they came to rob.

Flushed with success, the Peruvian army advanced towards Lima, in full confidence that they could not fail in the reduction of a slender garrison, dispirited by disappointment, and not yet recovered from the consternation produced by an insurrection so general and unexpected. But they did not find an enemy unprepared. When they approached within eight leagues of the city, they were met

* Garcilasso, lib. ii. Zarate, lib. iii.

by a body of Spanish horse under Pedro de Lerma, and attacked with such impetuosity, that they were suddenly broken, and obliged to take shelter in the mountains. Thence they alarmed the whole country with the sound of their warlike music; and with their number increased to forty thousand, descended like a torrent to the plain, swept all before them, and drove the Spanish cavalry back to Lima, with the loss of twenty men. Animated by this advantage, the Peruvian army invested the city; and notwithstanding the valour and experience of Pizarro, the settlement must have fallen into the hands of the enemy, had not an accidental circumstance persuaded the superstitious assailants, that the Spaniards were certainly protected by some invisible power. In consequence of a heavy fall of rain, the river which runs by the city overflowed its banks, deluged the neighbouring country, drowned great numbers of the enemy, prevented them from renewing their attacks with the same facility, and opened a path for the garrison to introduce supplies. The Spaniards and Peruvians equally agreed in ascribing this flood, which was attended with such extraordinary consequences, to a miracle: the latter grew dispirited, thinking it in vain to strive against the gods, and the former were animated with a double portion of courage, from a belief that Heaven had visibly interposed in their favour. The Peruvians were now held together merely by the authority of their commanders, while the Spaniards triumphed in every rally, harrassed, fatigued, and kept in perpetual alarm a desponding multitude, which at last withdrew, leaving Pizarro to pursue what measures he thought proper*.

In the mean time we must return to Almagro, whose arrival at Cuzco induced the Inca to relinquish the siege, from a persuasion that the Adelantado's design was to succour his countrymen. A principal of honour, and the magnanimity of the sentiments of Manco Capac proved his ruin. Almagro made proposals to him of an alliance against Pizarro, which he rejected with disdain, saying, That he had taken up arms to vindicate his own rights and the liberties of his people, not to assist in the base designs of one usurper against another; and when his officers urged him to accept of the offer, alledging, that in promoting the discord of the Spaniards consisted his greatest security, as by weakening both parties he might at last recover his dominions, and totally expel the usurpers, he replied, That it became not the character of an Inca to dissemble, or fail in his engagements; and that he would rather forfeit his empire and live in perpetual exile and obscurity, than maintain his dignity by falsehood and treachery. In consequence of this way of thinking, that generous monarch, disappointed in his designs upon Cuzco, and worsted in an attack upon the forces of Almagro, despairing of success in the attempt to recover his dominions, and desirous that his subjects might suffer as little as possible on account of their loyalty, requested them to disperse and return to their dwellings, and appease by submission the indignation of the conquerors, while he himself would watch over their safety in a secure retreat, in order to seize the first opportunity of recovering their rights, and punishing the insolent and rapacious usurpers of their liberty and property. "I propose," said he, "retiring

* Id. *ibid.*

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to the mountains of the Andes, where it shall be my greatest comfort to hear that you enjoy security and happiness under your new governors, beyond my expectation. Revolving schemes for your welfare, shall be the only business of my melancholy solitude. Meantime, I conjure you, to serve and obey the Spaniards to the utmost of your power, that you may be well treated by them; and now and then heave a sigh and drop a tear to the memory of your prince, who ever loved and cherished his people *."

A. D. 1537. The dispersion of the Peruvian army left the Spaniards at full liberty to display their animosity, and pursue their resentment against each other. Almagro advancing to the walls of Cuzco, summoned Ferdinand Pizarro to surrender the city into his hands, as being within the grant made to him by his Catholic majesty. Ferdinand replied, that he held the city in virtue of a commission from his brother Francis, and could not deliver up his charge to any man, without his instructions: besides, he affirmed, that Almagro had no kind of right to it, as he knew it to be within the limits of his brother's government. Different schemes of accommodation were proposed without success, each endeavouring to deceive the other, or to corrupt his followers. Meanwhile the generous, open temper of Almagro, gained many of the garrison, who were disgusted with the harsh and domineering manners of the Pizarros. Encouraged by this defection, he assaulted the city by night; surprised the centinels, or was admitted by them; and investing the house, where Ferdinand and Gonzalo Pizarro resided, compelled them to surrender at discretion. Almost all the garrison cheerfully entered into the service of Almagro; his claim to the jurisdiction of Cuzco was universally acknowledged, and a form of administration was established in his name †.

Francis Pizarro being still ignorant of these transactions, and having received some considerable reinforcements from Hispaniola and Nicaragua, ordered five hundred men, under the command of Alonso de Alvarado, to march with all expedition to Cuzco, in hopes of relieving his brothers, if they and their garrison were not already cut off by the Peruvians, and at all adventures to attempt the recovery of the capital. This general began his march with so much celerity, and so little prudence, that, being unacquainted with the woods, and ill provided with guides, his army suffered much by fatigue and famine. At last he reached the river Abancay, where to his astonishment, he beheld his countrymen posted on the opposite banks, ready to oppose his passage. Almagro, however, wished to avoid hostilities: he sent messengers to Alvarado, requiring him to acknowledge his authority, and inviting him to embrace his party. These Alvarado put in irons: a behaviour which so much incensed Almagro, that he immediately advanced in person against him; and as that officer's military talents were not equal to his fidelity, his camp was surprised, his troops broken, and himself taken prisoner, almost without resistance ‡.

* Garcilasso, lib. ii. c. 29.
lib. iv. c. 1.

† Zarate, lib. ii. c. 4. Herrera, dec. IV.
‡ Herrera, dec. IV. lib. iv. c. 2.

As all Alvarado's foldiers, with Pedro de Lerma, who commanded under him, joined Almagro, it was now in his power finally to have decided the contest with his rival. But, like many great commanders, he was less able to improve, than to gain a victory. In a council of war which was held, in order to deliberate what step was next to be taken, Rodrigo Orgognez, an officer of great abilities, who acted as lieutenant-general, and who having served in the wars of Italy was accustomed to bold and decisive councils, advised Almagro instantly to issue orders for putting to death Ferdinand and Gonzalo Pizarro, Alvarado, and some other persons whom he could not hope to gain, and to march directly with his victorious army to Lima; to secure the governor, before he had time to prepare for his defence, and thence establish an intercourse with the other Spanish settlements in different parts of America. But Almagro on this occasion, suffered himself to be swayed by sentiments very unlike those which might be expected to influence the conduct of a man whose whole life, now far advanced, had been spent in acts of violence and rapacity, and by scruples little suited to the leader of a faction who had drawn his sword in civil war. Feelings of humanity restrained him from shedding the blood of his adversaries, and the dread of being deemed a rebel deterred him from entering a province which the king had allotted to another. He therefore marched quietly back to Cuzco; though the expediency of opening an intercourse with the sea was so universally urged, that he afterwards began his march at the head of five hundred Spanish horse and foot, and a large body of Indian auxiliaries, taking with him Ferdinand Pizarro, and leaving Gonzalo and Alvarado prisoners in the capital*.

Meanwhile Francis Pizarro, anxious to know the situation of his brothers, and the fate of Cuzco, having yet received no advices either from them or Alvarado, resolved to march in person towards that city. A seasonable reinforcement enabled him to set out on this expedition at the head of seven hundred horse and foot. He soon got intelligence of the raising of the siege of Cuzco, and the dispersion of the Peruvian army; but that good fortune was embittered with the death of his brother Juan: the day following he received the account of the proceedings of Almagro, and the imprisonment of his other two brothers; and on advancing a little farther, he was informed of the defeat of Alvarado, and the defection of his army. Such a tide of misfortunes had almost overwhelmed that spirit, which had continued firm and erect under the rudest shocks of adversity. Revenge sometimes occupied his whole mind: he thought of nothing but punishing the perfidious Almagro. That idea, however, was soon laid aside for more cautious measures, suggested by the state of his army.

When Pizarro began his march, he thought only of combating Indians; and his troops were accordingly armed in the manner best calculated for that purpose: but now, when he had a skilful and powerful enemy to encounter, it was necessary to provide himself in a very different manner, and also to wait the arrival of some troops, which he hourly expected from Panama. These considerations induced

* *Id. ibid.*

him to return to Lima, where he had notice of the approach of Almagro. This was new cause of uneasiness; but being perfectly acquainted with the character of his rival, his sagacity enabled him to elude the blow that threatened to crush him. He had recourse to arts which he had formerly practised with success: in order to gain time, he set on foot a negotiation; and Almagro was again weak enough to suffer himself to be amused with a prospect of terminating their differences by an amicable compromise.

As the adelantado was less formidable in the cabinet than the field, Pizarro, by varying his overtures, and shifting his ground, sometimes yielding all that his rival could desire, and then retracting all that he had granted, dexterously protracted the negotiation to such a length, that, though every hour was precious to Almagro, several months elapsed without any real progress being made towards an accommodation. During this interval, Gonzalo Pizarro and Alvarado had found means to corrupt the soldiers to whose custody they were committed, and not only made their escape themselves, but persuaded sixty of the garrison of Cuzco to accompany their flight. Orgognez seized this opportunity to press Almagro to put Ferdinand Pizarro to death, and break off all pacific measures with such a perfidious set of men. But neither the remonstrances of Orgognez, nor the discovery of a stratagem to cut him off at an interview, could make the adelantado renounce the plan of negotiation; and as fortune had now delivered one of his brothers, the governor did not scruple at one act of perfidy more to procure the release of the other. He proposed, That every point of controversy between Almagro and himself should be submitted to the decision of the emperor Charles; that until the award of their sovereign was known, each should keep possession of that part of the country which he now occupied; that Ferdinand Pizarro should be set at liberty, and return instantly to Spain, together with the officers to be sent by Almagro, in order to represent the justice of his pretensions*.

Obvious as the design of Pizarro was, in making such propositions, and familiar as his artifice might now have been to his adversary, Almagro, always sincere himself, and still desirous of avoiding the farther effusion of blood, and other fatal consequences of civil war, relied on the sincerity of a man who had so often deceived him, and concluded an agreement on these terms. Orgognez was no sooner informed of this treaty, which had been negotiated without his knowledge, than laying hold of his beard with his left hand, while with his right he made a motion towards his throat, "Orgognez! Orgognez!" cried he, "this head will fall a sacrifice to your friendship for Almagro†." His officers in general were sensible, that this measure would prove the ruin of their party: but Almagro persevered in his resolution, and set Ferdinand Pizarro at liberty according to his agreement.

All the objects of the governor's policy being now accomplished, he immediately threw off every disguise, as soon as he was joined by his brother; and

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. iv. c. 2. Zarate, lib. iii. c. 9.
lib. iv. c. 2.

† Herrera, dec. IV.

having received some considerable reinforcements, besides those he expected, he made vigorous preparations for supporting his claim to the entire jurisdiction over Peru. A herald was dispatched to Almagro, requiring him instantly to surrender Cuzco; and this message the governor endeavoured to enforce with a detachment of seven hundred Spanish troops, sent towards the capital, under the conduct of his brothers, Ferdinand and Gonzalo, in whom he could perfectly confide for the execution of his most violent schemes, while he himself marched with another army to Chinca, where Almagro had founded a little colony, near which he was then encamped. Advice of these movements induced the adelantado to march with all possible celerity back to Cuzco, in direct opposition to the sentiments of Orgognez, who advised him to attack Lima, during the division of the governor's forces; affirming that the reduction of that place would secure in his interest not only the shipping, but all the recruits which were daily flocking from other parts of the continent. Almagro rejected this advice from the same scruples which had led him to negotiate: he was still unwilling to be guilty of a direct violation of the rights granted by the government to his adversary; and that punctilio, joined to another instance of misconduct, proved his ruin.

As Almagro's soldiers were more seasoned to the climate than those under the Pizarros, he got before their detachment; and received intelligence on his march, that the enemy were obliged to halt, in a very sickly condition in the mountains. All his officers urged him to embrace so favourable an opportunity of terminating the contest, by attacking his adversaries, when they were unable to defend themselves, and might all be cut off to a man; but Almagro, either discrediting the information, or depending on his superiority in cavalry, which could only act to advantage in an open country, permitted the Pizarros to advance without any obstruction, except what arose from the desert and horrid regions through which they marched, while he proceeded to Cuzco. His purpose seems to have been to shut himself up in that city, the cause of all the contention, and rest his fate upon the issue of a siege. Such a resolution was perfectly consonant to the ideas of an infirm old man, who placed more confidence in the justice of his cause than the force of his arms: he was obliged, however, to yield to the impetuosity of his troops, who were eager to bring the long protracted contest to a more speedy conclusion, and insisted on giving their antagonists battle in the open plain. The Pizarros did not decline the combat.

Unfortunately for Almagro, at this crisis of his fate, he was so much worn out with the fatigue of a tedious and difficult march, to which his advanced age was unequal, that he could not exert his wonted activity. He was even confined to his bed; but roused, by the clamours of his soldiers, he ordered himself to be carried at the head of his troops on a litter, and marched out of Cuzco to meet the enemy, leaving to Orgognez the disposition for battle. Orgognez's arrangement was very good; and had he paid a little more regard to the nature of the ground, and avoided engaging himself personally so deeply in the engagement as prevented him from giving the proper attention to the execution of his

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orders, or from seizing those opportunities which rise and vanish in a moment, it would probably have been attended with success. The infantry was reduced to one battalion formed in a kind of column in the centre; each side being supported by arquebusers, and a squadron of horse, in which, as already observed, Almagro was superior to the enemy. The artillery was disposed on the right wing, while the front was secured by a rivulet and some marshy ground, that rendered all access difficult and hazardous. Ferdinand Pizarro drew up his army in a manner nearly similar, but with more regard to the ground; for he took care to place his cavalry on the firm plain, where they could bear down upon his opponent's infantry, while the cavalry of Almagro were entangled in the Salinas, or salt-pits, whence the battle took its name. This was the chief oversight in the disposition made by Orgognez; who, though possessed of great military talents, had not the same ascendancy either over the spirit or affections of the soldiers, as the leader whom they had long been accustomed to follow and revere.

Orgognez was likewise deceived in the opinion which he entertained of the enemy's strength. Pizarro's deficiency in cavalry was more than counterbalanced by his superiority in numbers, and by two companies of well disciplined musketeers, which, on account of the insurrection of the Indians, the emperor had sent from Spain; and as the use of fire arms was not common or perfect among the adventurers in America, hastily equipped for service at their own expence, this small band of soldiers regularly trained and armed, was a novelty in Peru, and decided the fate of the day. Pizarro began the action, by crossing the rivulet with his horse; but his temerity had almost proved his ruin. Orgognez played his artillery vigorously, swept off the entire first rank of the enemy, and staggered their whole body of cavalry. But his impetuosity destroyed the fruits of that advantage. He rushed at the head of his horse against Pizarro; engaged him hand to hand; dismounted him; and bid fair for a complete victory, when the two companies of musketeers advanced, and galled his cavalry with such a heavy and well-sustained fire, that they were unable to keep their ground. Orgognez himself received a shot in the forehead while endeavouring to rally and animate his troops. By this time the targeteers, of which the infantry chiefly consisted, were come to blows, and the battle raged, in all quarters, with great fury; when a report being suddenly spread that Orgognez was killed, the cavalry betook themselves to a precipitate flight, and the rout became general.

The barbarity of the conquerors stained the glory which they acquired by this complete victory. The violence of civil discord hurried on some to slaughter their countrymen with indiscriminate cruelty, while the means of private revenge infligated others to single out individuals as the objects of their vengeance. Orgognez, Pedro de Lerma, and several officers of distinction, were massacred in cold blood. Almagro himself was taken prisoner, and committed to close custody. Cuzco was pillaged by the victorious troops, who entered with the fugitives,

fugitives, and collected the wealth of their antagonists with the same avidity that they had shed their blood*.

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But the booty found in that capital, though very considerable, was so far from satisfying the soldiers of Pizarro, that they were ready to break out in open mutiny. They expected a new distribution of lands; a measure on which Ferdinand did not think it advisable to enter, before the arrival of the marquis. In the meantime he had recourse to the same expedient which his brother had employed on a like occasion: in order at once to divert their chagrin, and find occupation for such turbulent spirits, he encouraged his most active and enterprising officers to attempt the discovery and reduction of various provinces that had not yet submitted to the crown of Spain; and as every leader, who undertook any of these new expeditions, endeavoured to represent it in a light equally inviting to avarice and ambition, volunteers resorted with ardour to every standard, in hopes of being conducted to some rich country, whose treasures were yet unrisfled. Several of Almagro's soldiers engaged in the same service; so that Pizarro was at once freed from the importunity of his discontented friends, and the presence of his lately avowed enemies†.

This favourable state of their affairs finally determined the two brothers in regard to the fate of Almagro, who had now remained some months in prison, under all the anguish of suspense. They ordered an impeachment of high treason to be drawn up against him, in which he was charged with having seized upon Cuzco by force of arms; with occasioning the effusion of much Spanish blood; with entering upon a clandestine correspondence and secret treaty with the Inca, Manco Capac; with infringing on the terms of the emperor's grant, and encroaching on the limits of Francis Pizarro's jurisdiction; with breach of all the articles of several contracts with the marquis; and with fighting two battles against his countrymen, contrary to the peace of his sovereign lord the king, one at Abancay and another at Salinas. These charges, and diverse other crimes and misdemeanours of less moment were proved according to certain forms of law, and he was condemned to suffer death. The sentence astonished, and even appalled him: though he had often braved death in the field, its approach under this disgraceful form appeared so terrible, that he sought to deprecate it by supplications unworthy of his military character. He besought the Pizarros to remember how much he had contributed to the success and prosperity of their family, if they had entirely forgot the ancient friendship between their brother and him; he reminded them of the tenderness which he had shewn for their lives, when he had them entirely in his power, and of his constant refusal to put to death any of the friends of the marquis, although they had expressed the bitterest enmity against his person; he conjured them to pity an infirm old man, whose whole life almost had been spent in toil, hardship, or misfortune, and permit him to pass the remainder of his days in making his peace with Heaven. But all his entreaties were to no purpose: the brothers remained inflexible; and Almagro, when he found his

* Zarate, lib. iii. c. 11, 12. Herrera, dec. IV. lib. iv. c. 3.

† Id. ibid.

fate to be inevitable, met it with the fortitude of a hero. He was privately strangled in prison, and publicly beheaded on a scaffold in the great square of Cuzco; his body being stript naked by the executioner, and afterwards exposed for the greater part of the day, without a friend to pay the last duty to his remains. Not that he wanted friends; but those were restrained by a guard from approaching the place of execution, and his enemies were too much occupied with other passions to listen to the dictates of humanity. At last the corpse was carried off by an old slave that belonged to the adelantado, and who wrapt it in a coarse cloth, and buried it in the most decent manner in his power, at the hazard of his own life*.

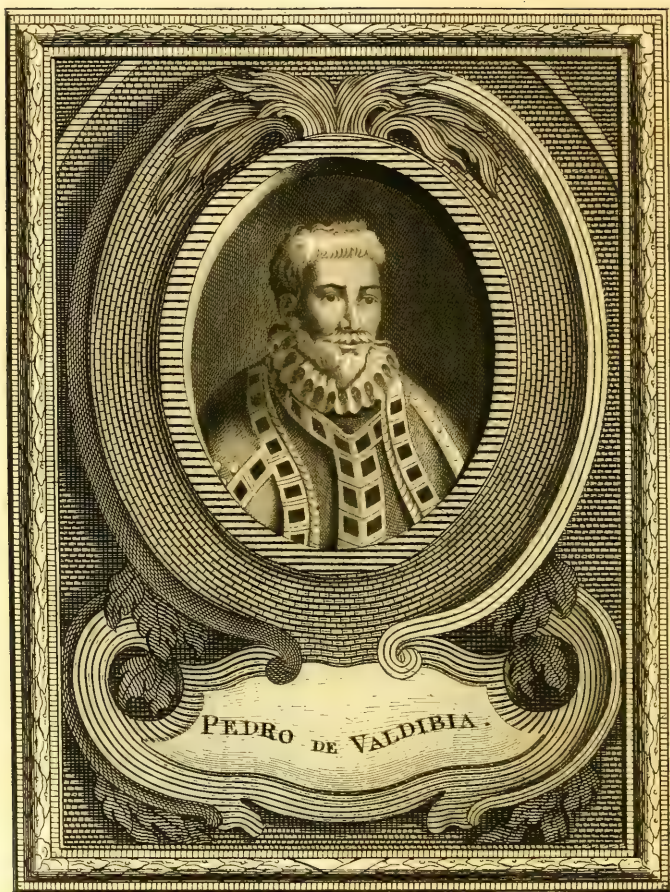
Almagro suffered in the seventy-fifth year of his age, and left one son by an Indian woman, whom, though at that time a prisoner in Lima, he named his successor in his government, pursuant to a power which the emperor had granted him. He was a sincere friend, a generous benefactor, a zealous subject, and an able commander. The Peruvians, who regarded him as their parent and protector against the rigour of the Pizarros, honoured his ashes with unfeigned tears of sorrowful affection. Francis Pizarro was chiefly blamed on account of his death, though his brothers were the immediate actors, it being well known that they durst not have taken such a bold step without his authority; and Ferdinand often declared as much, in order to free himself from the imputation of perjury and inhumanity†.

The barbarous execution of Almagro was so far from producing the intended effect, of gaining the Pizarros an absolute and undisputed authority in Peru, that it only increased the number of their enemies, though self-preservation induced many of them for a time to suppress their resentment. The Peruvians had again recourse to arms, either to revenge the death of the adelantado, or to profit by the divisions among the Spaniards, who now found themselves more hardly pressed, even when their numbers were greatly augmented, than when they first entered upon the conquest with an handful of men. The Peruvians were animated by the desire of revenge; and they had besides overcome the consternation and terror which had seized them on the first sight of the fire arms and horses. What they formerly conceived to be the thunder of heaven, they were sensible was no more than the contrivance of human genius; and they had taken several horses which they ventured to use against the Spaniards, demonstrating by this and other improvements in the art of war, that they were extremely ingenious and imitative. They defeated their enemies in several engagements; fought them with their own weapons; and were not even afraid or ignorant of the use of muskets, some of which they had taken in different rencounters.

This resistance was chiefly experienced in the province of Charcas, where Gonzalo Pizarro commanded a considerable body of troops. In Chili the Spaniards did not meet with less opposition. Pedro de Valdivia, who had

* Garcilasso, lib. ii. c. 7. Zúñiga, lib. ii. c. 12.
lib. i. c. 2.

† Herrera, dec. IV.



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learned the rudiments of war in Italy, and was deemed one of the best Spanish officers in America, was sent thither immediately after the battle of Salinas. The Chilese disputed every inch of ground; but they could not after all their efforts prevent him from penetrating as far as the valley of Guasco, which he found to be incredibly fertile and populous. Here he founded the city of St. Jago, and built a castle for the defence of the new colony, and the security of the gold mines in the neighbourhood, in which he forced the natives to labour. Greatly exasperated at this imposition of servitude, the Chilese flew to arms. Valdivia took the field against them, and defeated them in several obstinate engagements; but, though he received a considerable reinforcement from Peru, his army was at last cut off, and himself taken prisoner. The conquerors, according to the custom of America, condemned him to a cruel death; and many years elapsed, and much blood was shed, before the Spaniards could establish their dominion in Chili*.

Gonzalo Pizarro was more fortunate in subduing the province of Charcas, the entire reduction of which he at last accomplished, and marched upon a still more perilous expedition.—Rapid as the progress of the Spaniards had been in South America since their first landing, their avidity of dominion was not yet satisfied: they still longed to discover new countries, undeterred by the disasters they had suffered in many wild attempts. Francis Pizarro, whose arrogance after the death of Almagro was altogether insufferable, and who seems to have resolved that no person should possess any station of distinguished eminence or authority but those of own family, deprived Benalcazar, the conqueror of Quito, of his command in that kingdom, and appointed his brother Gonzalo to the government of it, after the reduction of Charcas. He at the same time instructed him to attempt the discovery and conquest of a country to the east of the Andes, where according to the report of the natives, gold was found in great abundance, and which produced cinnamon and other valuable spices.

Gonzalo not inferior to any of his brothers in courage, and no less ambitious of acquiring distinction, eagerly engaged in that difficult service. He set out from Quito at the head of three hundred and forty soldiers, near one half of whom were horsemen, with four thousand Indians to carry their provisions. The difficulties which they encountered in this expedition surpass description. In forcing their way through the defiles, or over the ridges of the Andes, excess of cold and fatigue, to neither of which they were accustomed, proved fatal to the greater part of their wretched attendants; and the Spaniards, though more robust, and accustomed to a variety of climates, suffered so much, that many of them perished. When they descended into the low country, where they hoped to find relief, their miseries increased. The vast plains on which they were now entering, either altogether without inhabitants, or occupied by the rudest and least industrious tribes in the New World, yielded little subsistence; and during two months it rained so incessantly that their cloaths were never dry. They were

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. vii. c. 2, &c.

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obliged to cut their way through woods, or make it over marshes. Such unre-mitted toil, and continual scarcity of food, seem sufficient to have exhausted the strength and the spirits of any troops; but the fortitude and perseverance of Gonzalo and his companions were insuperable: allured by frequent but false accounts of the rich country before them, they persisted in struggling on until they reached the banks of the Napo, one of the large streams which pour into the Maragnon, or river of Amazons, and contribute to its grandeur. There they built a barque, which they expected would prove of great utility, both in conveying them over rivers, and in exploring the country. This vessel was manned with fifty soldiers, under the command of Francisco Orellana, the officer next in rank to Pizarro; and the stream carried them down with such rapidity, that they were soon out of sight of their countrymen, who followed slowly, and with difficulty by land.

No sooner did Orellana reach the Maragnon, than he formed the scheme of distinguishing himself as a discoverer, by following the course of that vast river until it joined the ocean, and surveying the extensive regions through which it flows. This scheme of Orellana's, which perfectly corresponded with the predominant passion of the age, was as bold as it was treacherous: his crime is in some measure palliated by the glory of its object: if he violated his duty to his commander, and abandoned his fellow soldiers in a pathless desert, where all their hopes of safety or success depended upon his barque, he ventured upon a navigation of near two thousand leagues, through unknown nations, in a vessel hastily constructed, with green timber, and by very unskilful hands, without compass or pilot. His courage and alacrity supplied every defect. Committing himself fearlessly to the guidance of the stream, he continued his course towards the coast, making frequent descents on both sides of the river; sometimes seizing by force of arms the provisions of the fierce savages seated on its banks, and sometimes procuring a supply of food by a friendly intercourse with more gentle tribes. After a long series of dangers, which he encountered with amazing fortitude, and distresses which he supported with no less magnanimity, he reached the ocean, where new perils awaited him: these he also surmounted, and got safe to the island of Cubagua, whence he sailed to Spain, and filled with extravagant fictions a voyage truly memorable; and which, independent of the extraordinary circumstances that attended it, first led to any certain knowledge of those vast regions which stretch from the Andes to the Atlantic ocean*.

The consternation of Pizarro was inexpressible, when he arrived at the confluence of the Napo and Maragnon, where he had ordered Orellana to wait for him, and did not there find the barque. He could not allow himself to suspect, that a man whom he had entrusted with such an important command, could be so base and unfeeling as to desert him at such a juncture. Imputing, therefore, his absence from the place of rendezvous to some unknown accident, he advanced above fifty leagues along the banks of the Maragnon, expecting every moment to see the barque appear with a supply of provisions. At length he met with an

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. vi. c. 3. Zarate, lib. iv. c. 4.

officer whom Orellana had left to perish in the desert, because he had remonstrated against his perfidy, which was now made fully known to Pizarro and his followers. The spirit of the stoutest veteran sunk within him at the melancholy information. They were separated from Quito by twelve hundred miles of a country rough, barren, and inhospitable; yet all desired to be led instantly thither, as the only means of preserving an existence already almost spent by the hardships which they had undergone. Pizarro, though he assumed an air of tranquillity, did not oppose their inclination. They accordingly began their march; and in their return encountered greater hardships than they had endured in their progress, without the alluring hopes which then animated them. Hunger compelled them not only to eat all their horses and dogs, but to devour the most loathsome reptiles, and even to gnaw the leather of their saddles and sword-belts. Four thousand Indians, and two hundred and ten Spaniards, perished in this wild and disastrous expedition, which continued near two years: so that, of fifty men were on board the barque with Orellana, only fourscore got back to Quito; and these were naked like savages, and so emaciated with fatigue, famine, and disease, that they had more the appearance of spectres than of human beings *.

The joy of these unfortunate men on meeting with their countrymen, was too strong for words to express: they poured out their hearts in tears and ecstatic transports at finding themselves once more within the pale of society. But their leader, who had shared in all their calamities, on returning to his government, instead of being permitted to enjoy that repose which his condition required, was saluted with information that discomposed him more than all the hardships he had sustained. His brother Ferdinand had gone over to Spain, loaded with treasure, in hopes of successfully vindicating his conduct in regard to the death of Almagro. But accounts of that transaction having been carried to court, before his arrival, by some of the opposite faction, who represented it in the most atrocious light, Ferdinand was committed to prison, where he languished above twenty years, and Christoval Vaca de Castro, a judge in the court of Royal Audience at Valladolid, was sent out to examine into the state of affairs in Peru, and report his opinion of the late disorders †.

This intelligence was sufficient to alarm Gonzalo; but events still more fatal to his family had happened in Peru itself. His brother Francis, on the death of Almagro, considering himself as the unrivalled possessor of that vast empire, had parcelled out its territories among the conquerors with the illiberal spirit of a party leader. The adherents of Almagro, among whom were many of the original adventurers, were totally excluded from any portion in those lands, towards the acquisition of which they had contributed so largely. They murmured in secret, and vowed revenge; but some time elapsed before they were able to compass it. Meanwhile their condition was most deplorably wretched: deprived of their estates, and excluded from all offices and employments, they were condemned to wander about like vagabonds, in that rich country which had been subdued by

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. vi. c. 2. Zarate, lib. iv. c. 5.
lib. vi. c. 2.

† Herrera, dec. IV.

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their valour; the most effectual means being taken to prevent them from returning to Europe, lest their complaints might reach the emperor's ear. Many of them, in despair, resorted to Lima, where young Almagro resided in a kind of imprisonment. His house was always open to them; and the slender part of his father's fortune, or rather the pension, which the marquis allowed him to enjoy was spent in affording them subsistence.

That warm attachment with which every person who had served under the elder Almagro devoted himself to his interest, was quickly transferred to his son, who was now grown up to manhood, and possessed many of those qualities which captivate the affections of soldiers. Though of a diminutive stature *, he was dexterous at all martial exercises, bold, open, generous, and every way accomplished as a gentleman. In him the Almagrians found what they wanted, a point of union; and looking up to him as their head, were ready to undertake any thing for his advancement. This zeal for promoting the interests of young Almagro, and a desire of revenging the death of his father, joined to their own injuries and distresses, determined them to take speedy vengeance on Pizarro. Their necessities were indeed a sufficient motive: many of them were destitute of bread to eat; and twelve gentlemen, who had been officers of distinction, lodged at Lima in the same house, and had but one cloak among them, which was worn alternately by him who had occasion to appear in public, the other eleven being obliged to remain at home for want of a decent dress †.

Pizarro, being informed of the distress of these gentlemen, sent them word, that he would assign lands for their maintenance; but as they had already formed their resolution, and were thoroughly enraged by the injuries they had suffered, and the miseries to which they had been exposed, they indignantly replied, That they would rather perish than be indebted to him for the means of preserving their existence. The marquis, sensible he had justly provoked the Almagrians, now kept close in his palace, never stirring abroad without a strong guard; and watched their motions with so strict an eye, that they found it difficult to assemble in such numbers as to give any probability of success to their designs. The greatest circumspection was necessary: they entered the city in small parties, and were lodged in the houses of some persons who approved of the intended revolution. When their number in Lima amounted to near three hundred men, they began to imagine their strength sufficient for the meditated revenge. Among them were many experienced officers and veteran soldiers, who had manifested their courage on the most trying occasions. To these young Almagro resigned his judgment, suffering them to conduct the conspiracy in the manner they believed most advisable. Their first scheme was to assassinate Pizarro on Midsummer-day, as he went to hear mass in the cathedral church of Lima; but this design being either discovered or suspected, the marquis confined himself under pretence of indisposition, and assembled his friends to consult on proper measures for his own safety, as well as for punishing his enemies.

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. viii. c. 3.

† Herrera, dec. IV. lib. vi. c. 2.

Jan. 26.

The disappointed conspirators now laid aside their hostile intentions, resolving to wait the arrival of Vaca de Castro; who was vested, as already observed, with powers to examine into the conduct of the two factions, and either to redress grievances, or report them to the court of Spain. But this new resolution was dropt, on advice being received, that Pizarro had obtained certain information of their designs, and was preparing for the most violent revenge. Fearing they might all be sacrificed to his fury, they now resumed their desperate purpose. Juan de Herrada, an officer of great abilities, who had the charge of Almagro's education, and who took the lead in all their consultations, also led the way in carrying them into execution. He sallied out from the house of his pupil, at mid-day, at the head of eighteen of the most determined conspirators, all in complete armour, with their swords drawn, calling aloud as they advanced towards the marquis's palace, "Long live the king! but let the tyrant die!"—Warned of their motions by a signal given, their associates were in arms ready to support them; but their assistance was unnecessary. The people, suspended in that inactive amazement, which the execution of a bold and sudden enterprise generally inspires, made no opposition; and though Pizarro was usually surrounded by a numerous train of attendants, yet as he was just risen from dinner, and most of his domestics had retired to their own apartments, the conspirators passed the two outer courts of the palace unobserved. They were at the bottom of the stair-case, before a page in waiting could give the alarm to his master, who was conversing with some friends in a large hall. The marquis, whose steady mind no form of danger could appal, starting up, called for arms, and ordered Francis de Cheves, to make fast the door. But that officer, anxious about his own safety, without retaining sufficient recollection to discern the proper means, in place of obeying so prudent a command, ran wildly to the top of the stair-case, saying, "What is the meaning of this, gentlemen?—Let me not share in your hatred to the marquis, for I was always a friend." Instead of answering, or regarding his request, they stabbed him to the heart, and burst into the hall. Some of the persons who were there threw themselves over the windows; others attempted to fly; and a few followed their leader into an inner apartment. Animated with the hope of suddenly seizing the object of their vengeance, the conspirators rushed forward, crying "Where is the tyrant?"—Pizarro, with no other arms than his sword and buckler, gallantly defended the door, and supported by his half-brother Alcantara, and his little knot of friends, maintained the unequal contest with intrepidity worthy of his past exploits, and with vigour incredible at the advanced age of sixty-three. "Courage!" cried he, "companions; we are yet enow to make those traitors repent of their audacity." But the conspirators were protected by their armour, while every thrust they made took effect: Alcantara fell dead at his brother's feet; the other defenders of the marquis were mortally wounded; and he himself no longer able to parry the many weapons violently aimed at his life, received a furious thrust in the throat, sunk to the ground, and instantly expired*.

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. vii. c. 1. Zarate, lib. iv. c. 6—8.

C H A P. X.

State of Affairs in Peru from the Death of Pizarro, to its final Settlement as a Spanish Province.

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PIZARRO was no sooner slain, than the conspirators ran out into the streets, and waving their bloody swords, proclaimed the death of the tyrant. Being joined by their associates, to the number of two hundred and upwards, they conducted young Almagro in solemn procession through the city; and assembling the magistrates and principal inhabitants, compelled them to acknowledge him as lawful successor to his father in the government. The palace of Pizarro, the house of his secretary Picado, that of his brother, Alcantara, and a few others, were pillaged by the soldiers, who found there an immense booty; and had the satisfaction of at once being revenged on their enemies, and of enriching themselves with the spoils of those who had excluded them from what they considered to be their due. The treasure found in the palace of Pizarro alone amounted to a million of pesos*.

The boldness and success of this conspiracy, as well as the name and popular qualities of the new leader, drew many followers to his standard; and as all those who were dissatisfied with the rapacious government of Pizarro during his latter years, also declared in favour of Almagro, he was soon at the head of eight hundred gallant veterans. These he committed to the command of Herrera, whose activity as a conspirator, and ability as an officer, seemed equally to entitle him to the rank of general, as Almagro's youth and inexperience disqualified him for acting in that capacity himself. But notwithstanding this respectable force, and though many towns submitted, the acquiescence in the government of Almagro was by no means universal. The officers who commanded in some provinces refused to acknowledge his authority, until it was confirmed by the emperor: others resolved to wait the arrival of Vaca de Castro before they declared themselves; while those to whom the memory of Pizarro was dear, erected the royal standard, and made preparations to revenge the death of their ancient leader.

Cuzco at first submitted to Almagro; but Gomez de Tortoya, a leading man in that capital, and the particular friend of Pizarro, dispatched messengers secretly to all his partizans in the adjacent provinces, acquainting them with the late tragical event, and requiring them to assemble in arms the Spaniards in their neighbourhood, in order to oppose the usurpation of the assassins. Nuno de Castro, Garcilasso de la Vega, and others, accordingly repaired to Cuzco, while Tortoya went in search of Alvarez Holguin, who, with an hundred men had set out on an expedition to Callao, before the death of Pizarro. His application to this officer was successful. Holguin declared himself the enemy of the new administration, and took upon him, at the request of Tortoya, the

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. vii. c. 1.

dignity of captain-general of the league now forming against Almagro. He immediately erected his standard; sent manifestos to Charcas and Arequebas; augmented his forces to two hundred men; directed his march towards Cuzco; and so terrified the Almagrians with the news of his approach, that they quitted the city with the utmost precipitation. On his arrival the Pizarrists augmented surprisingly, and he was confirmed in his command by the suffrages of the party*.

War was now openly declared against the Almagrians, the citizens of Cuzco obliging themselves to repay the king whatever sums of money Holguin should expend from the royal treasury in prosecution of the hostile measures intended; and advice being received about this time that Alonso de Alvarado had erected the royal standard in the same cause at St. Juan de la Frontera, the confidence of the Pizarrists was augmented to such a degree that they were little alarmed at the intelligence of Almagro's advancing at the head of eight hundred men to give them battle, though it was resolved in a council of war to march by the way of the mountains to join Alvarado. Meanwhile Almagro having received minute information of all that was transacting in Cuzco, determined by the advice of his officers to intercept Holguin; first endeavouring to secure his interest in Lima, and carrying off the children and friends of Pizarro, in order to prevent insurrections during his absence. One piece of barbarity acted upon this occasion proved advantageous to the cause of his enemies: Almagro, out of personal pique, and in hopes of discovering the secret treasures of Pizarro, ordered his secretary, Picado, to be tortured, and then put to death, because he resisted the most cruel attempts to extort a confession†. Like cruelties were committed in other places.

Such was the situation of the Spanish affairs in South America when Vaca de Castro arrived at Quito, with the king's commission appointing him governor of Peru in case of the death of Pizarro, into whose conduct he was sent to examine. He had intelligence of that event on his march; and his jurisdiction was acknowledged without hesitation by Benalcazar, adelantado, or lieutenant-general for the emperor in Popayan, and by Pedro de Puelles, who, in the absence of Gonzalo Pizarro had the command of the troops left in Quito. From that city he issued commissions to the different Spanish settlements in Peru, constituting such magistrates as he thought proper, and in all respects exercising the prerogatives of a governor. His authority was generally acknowledged, and his own talents, assisted by certain fortunate circumstances, made it still more respected. While he was exerting his influence and address to assemble such a body of troops as should secure him from the insults of the adverse party, he received a letter from Holguin and Alonso de Alvarado, who had now united their forces, assuring him of their obedience to the king's pleasure, and requesting him to repair to Truxillo to take charge of the army. He immediately began his march, with the dignity that became his character, and was joined on the road by crowds

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. vii. c. 1. Zarate, lib. iv. c. 12.
dec. IV. lib. vii. c. 1.

† Herrera,

of Spaniards and Indians, determined on implicit obedience to the royal mandate. On his arrival at Truxillo he found his army very considerable, and impressed with the strongest sentiments of duty and loyalty, all the officers binding themselves by a sealed instrument to obey his authority; and as the first proof of their sincerity they resigned their commissions into his hands, either to be renewed or revoked at his pleasure. From Truxillo, de Castro marched to Lima, where, having prepared the minds of the people by his emissaries, he was received with the honours due to a viceroy of Peru, and joined by all the inhabitants able to carry arms*.

While every thing thus succeeded to the wish of the new governor, Almagro, disappointed in his designs upon Holguin, directed his march towards Cuzco, took possession of that capital, and replaced in the magistracy all those who had absented themselves on the triumph of the opposite party. His next care was to provide a train of artillery; in which he found no difficulty, copper being plentiful at Cuzco, and his army provided with persons skilful in casting cannon. He was busied in the most vigorous preparations, when certain appointments, which had taken place in consequence of the death of Herrada, the skilful guide of his youth and of his measures, lighted up the flames of dissention among his followers, to the great prejudice of his affairs. Christopher de Sotelo and Garcia de Alvarado now became his chief counsellors. They had the direction of the army jointly, and each aspired separately at the command. Rivals in glory and in the favour of Almagro, their resentment was soon roused to the most rancorous animosity, which terminated in the death of Sotelo, who was slain in the market-place. The friends of the deceased determined to revenge the injury; and every thing threatened the most violent convulsions, among a set of men who had the most powerful motives to unanimity, when Almagro interposed his authority, and effected a temporary reconciliation, dissembling his sentiments of the conduct of Alvarado till a more seasonable opportunity. But it was not possible for Almagro to remain long in this moderate and politic disposition: the violence of Alvarado's temper obliged him to come to extremities. That officer, dreading Almagro's just indignation, thought he could not render himself secure without shedding the blood of his leader and benefactor. For this purpose he contrived to invite him to an entertainment, where he proposed to execute his atrocious design; but Almagro, having some intimation of the conspiracy, excused himself from the visit, by pretending indisposition, and Alvarado calling to inquire after his health, was instantly put to death†.

Having by this severe, but seasonable punishment, quieted the spirit of faction among his followers, Almagro drew out his forces, amounting to seven hundred Spaniards, and several thousands of Indians, and began his march, with an intention either to give battle to the governor, or to procure advantageous terms by treaty for himself and his friends. As his troops were almost all

* Garcilasso, lib. iii. c. 16. Zarate, lib. iv. c. 18.
dec. IV. lib. viii. c. 2.

† Id. *ibid.* Herrera,

veterans,

veterans, who had served under his father, and his train of artillery greatly superior to that of the enemy, he made himself pretty confident of victory, should it prove necessary to come to a hostile decision; but his wish was to accommodate matters amicably. He accordingly dispatched messengers with pacific proposals, when he advanced within a few leagues of the governor's camp. They were instructed to represent to Vaca de Castro, That Almagro's father had performed eminent services for the court of Spain; that he had always proved himself loyal and faithful to his sovereign; that he had been barbarously murdered by order of Francis Pizarro; that the revenge taken was just; and that his son now only demanded to be restored to the government of New Toledo, in which was included Cuzco, agreeable to the grant of the crown to his father. They also represented, That young Almagro was resolved to obey his majesty's commands implicitly, but hoped the governor would not abet the tyranny and oppression of the Pizarros. The officers also writ a letter to the governor, complaining of his partiality in rejecting them, as if they had opposed their sovereign, declaring themselves loyal subjects, and praying that all things might be amicably adjusted, in order to prevent the mischiefs which must otherwise ensue*.

Concealing ambition and cruelty under the mask of rigid justice, or persuaded that the Spanish government in Peru could have no stability, while the head of a faction had an existence, Vaca de Castro, relying on the superiority of his force, rejected all pacific overtures. He knew of no terms, he said, between the king and his subjects, except those of absolute authority and unconditional obedience; and as he was sensible that the opposite party would not throw themselves on his mercy, he was impatient to terminate the contest by a battle. Nor did Almagro and his followers decline this mode of decision, as they had now no hopes of accommodation. They met at Chupas, about two hundred miles from Cuzco. Almagro's camp was seated on an eminence, which determined him to wait the attack of the enemy, who appeared eager to engage: as they advanced up the ascent, he ordered his artillery, which was under the charge of Pedro de Candia, to pour grape-shot upon their ranks; but astonished to observe, that several discharges produced no effect, he suspected the fidelity of Candia, taxed him with treachery, and receiving no satisfactory answer, slew him with his own hand. He then pointed a cannon so judiciously, that he cut off a whole troop of the enemy. But they soon came too close to permit him to play his artillery. Both sides had recourse to their muskets, cross-bows, lances, and swords; and fought, for several hours, with all the fierce animosity inspired by the violence of civil rage, the rancour of private enmity, the eagerness of revenge, and the last efforts of despair. The contest remained doubtful till night came on; when young Almagro, who was in all parts, encouraging his men with wonderful resolution, observing Alvarado's cavalry begin to flag, cried, "Victory! take, and do not kill;"—but Vaca de Castro, perceiving Alvarado's distress, came up with a body of reserve, which decided the dispute. Numbers began to prevail over va-

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. viii. c. 2.

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lour. The sun was then set; and though Almagro and his followers did all that was in the power of men, fortune declared for Vaca de Castro. The carnage was great in proportion to the number of the combatants: out of fifteen hundred men, on both sides, five hundred lay dead on the field, and the number of the wounded was still greater. The governor was chiefly indebted for his success to the military talents of Francisco de Carvajal, a veteran officer formed under Gonzalvo de Cordova, the Great Captain, in the wars of Italy, and who in this engagement laid the foundation of his future fame in Peru*.

The severity of Vaca de Castro after the victory was equal to his inflexibility before it. He proceeded directly to try his prisoners as rebels: forty were condemned to suffer the death of traitors, others were banished from Peru; and Almagro, who had made his escape, and intended to take shelter in the mountains with his ally Manco Capac, till a more favourable opportunity should offer of trying his fortune in the field, being betrayed by the magistrates of Cuzco, where he went to secure his treasure, was publicly beheaded in the market-place†. In him the name of Almagro, and the spirit of the party was entirely extinct.

But all these severities were not sufficient to deter Gonzalo Pizarro from entertaining thoughts of rekindling the flames of civil war. He deemed himself injured by Vaca de Castro in assuming the government, which he claimed for himself as the brother and legitimate successor of the marquis. He was flattered in his pretensions by his friends; and a conspiracy was forming against the governor's authority, when the sagacity and vigilance of Vaca de Castro, penetrating into the designs of his enemies, frustrated the effects of all their machinations, without bloodshed, or any violent exertion of authority. He sent privately for Pizarro, and without betraying any symptoms of indignation, or dropping the least hint of the discovery he had made, ordered him to repair immediately to his estate in the province of Charcas, and to remain there till his farther pleasure was known. Gonzalo, who was in no condition to dispute the governor's commands, obeyed with seeming cheerfulness, in order to remove those suspicions for which he was conscious he had given occasion, and which Vaca de Castro probably entertained; and as he understood that rich silver mines had lately been discovered in that quarter, he employed himself in working them, until a more favourable opportunity should offer of pursuing the dictates of his ambition‡. Such an opportunity soon presented itself, and at a time when it was little to be expected.

Vaca de Castro no sooner found himself fully established in the government of Peru, than he applied himself with the greatest diligence to the administration of civil affairs. He began with public institutions, which equally regarded the welfare of the Spaniards and natives. Every one perceived the utility of his regulations; and the Peruvians paid the same respect to his edicts, as if they had proceeded from the lips of their adored Incas. Equitable divisions of lands were

* Zarate, lib. iv. c. 19. Garcilasso, lib. iii. c. 18. Herrera, dec. IV. lib. viii. c. 2.
† Id. *ibid.*
‡ Herrera, dec. IV. lib. viii. c. 4.

made, and colonies of Indians and Spaniards transplanted from barren spots to countries more fertile, but unpeopled. That his laws might be agreeable to the genius of the Peruvians, the governor informed himself concerning the institutions of the Incas; their method of administering justice, and other particulars, to which he conformed himself as nearly as the design he had formed of establishing a more regular polity, and the doctrines of Christianity would permit. He erected schools in several towns, ordering the children of the principal Peruvians to be instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, as well as of rational morality. He restrained the Spaniards, by severe laws, from using the natives with their accustomed barbarity; and he restored their lands to many of the caziques, giving them at the same time a kind of limited civil jurisdiction. He imposed restraints upon the licentiousness of the soldiers, and disposed their minds by proper encouragement to marriage, industry, and labour. Those who appeared dissatisfied with their condition, turbulent in their humour, or unfit to promote the ends of civil government, he sent on expeditions into distant provinces that had not yet submitted to the crown of Spain, in imitation of the policy pursued by the Pizarros. He inquired into the conduct of the king's officers, who amassed vast fortunes by rapine and oppression; by which means he raised himself many enemies among the Spaniards, while he engaged the affections and confidence of the Indians. But his vigour and perseverance enabled him to surmount all opposition, and to pursue with success every measure that could render Peru great and flourishing in itself, or advantageous to his native country*.

While Vaca de Castro was establishing such salutary regulations for the welfare of the people under his government, father Bartholomew de las Casas, whose humane temper had led him to commiserate the sufferings of the Indians in general, and to project schemes for their relief, had the satisfaction to find his plan adopted by the emperor Charles V. to whom he represented the wretched condition of the natives in all the Spanish colonies, on whom tasks were imposed without any regard to what they felt or to what they were able to perform, and who pined away and perished so fast that there was reason to apprehend his majesty, instead of possessing countries peopled to such a degree as to be susceptible of progressive improvement, would soon remain proprietor only of a vast uninhabited desert. Charles and his ministers, alarmed at these representations, called the good monk formally before them. Las Casas eagerly seized this opportunity of reviving maxims which he had long unsuccessfully urged relative to the treatment of the Indians; and with the moving eloquence natural to a man on whose mind the scenes he had beheld had made a deep impression, he described the irreparable waste of the human species in the New World, the Indian race almost totally swept away in the islands, in less than fifty years, and hastening to extinction on the continent with the same rapid decay; all which he imputed to the cruelty and exactions of his countrymen, and contended that nothing could

* Id. *ibid.* Garcilaso, lib. iii. c. 19.

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prevent the depopulation of America, but declaring its natives to be free men, and treating them as subjects, not as slaves. Nor did he confide for the success of this proposal in the powers of his oratory alone: in order to enforce them, he composed his famous treatise concerning the destruction of America; in which he relates, with many horrid circumstances, the devastation of every province that had been visited by the Spaniards.

Afflicted by the recital of so many actions shocking to humanity, the emperor determined at once to rescue the Indians from oppression, and to circumscribe the power and usurpations of his own subjects in the New World, which seemed no less necessary to render it a valuable acquisition. With this view, he ordered a body of laws to be framed, containing many salutary appointments with respect to the constitution and powers of the Supreme Council of the Indies; concerning the station and jurisdiction of the Royal Audiences in different parts of America; the administration of justice, and the order of government both ecclesiastical and civil. These were approved of by persons of all ranks; but other regulations were issued at the same time, among which were the following, that excited universal alarm, and occasioned the most violent convulsions:—"That as the *Repartimientos*, or shares of lands seized by several people appeared to be excessive, the Royal Audiences are empowered to reduce them to a moderate extent; that upon the death of any conqueror or planter, the lands and Indians granted to him shall not descend to his widow or children, but return to the crown; that the Indians shall henceforth be exempted from personal service, and shall not be compelled to carry the baggage of travellers, to labour in the mines, or to dive in the pearl fisheries; that the stated tribute due by them to their superior shall be ascertained, and they shall be paid as servants for any work they voluntarily perform; that all persons who are or have been in public offices, ecclesiastics of every denomination, hospitals, and monasteries, shall be deprived of the lands, and Indians allotted to them, and these to be annexed to the crown; that every person in Peru, who had any criminal concern in the contests between Pizarro and Almagro, should forfeit his lands and Indians *."

All the Spanish ministers who had hitherto been entrusted with the direction of American affairs, and who were best acquainted with the state of the country, remonstrated against those regulations, as pernicious to their infant colonies. They represented, That the number of Spaniards who had hitherto emigrated to the New World was so extremely small, that nothing could be expected from any effort of theirs for improving the vast regions over which they were scattered; that the success of every scheme for this purpose must depend upon the service of the Indians, whose native indolence and aversion to labour, no prospect of benefit or promise of reward could surmount; that the moment the right of imposing a task, and exacting the performance of it, was taken from their masters, every work of industry must cease, and all the sources from which wealth began to pour in upon Spain be stopp'd for ever: but Charles, tenacious at all times of his

* Garcilasso, lib. iii. c. 20. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. vi.

opinions, persisted in his resolution of publishing the laws; and that they might be carried into execution with greater vigour and authority in the country of which we are treating, he resolved to nominate a new governor, to whose conduct they could have no retrospect, and who therefore would be more ready to enforce them. He accordingly appointed Blasco Nugnez Vela, surveyor of the ports of Castile, to supersede Vaca de Castro in the government of Peru, with the title of Viceroy; and in order to strengthen his administration, he established a court of royal audience in Lima, in which four lawyers of eminence were to preside as judges*.

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In the same fleet with Blasco Nugnez Vela sailed Francisco Tello de Sandoval, whom the emperor authorised to repair to Mexico as *visitador*, or superintendent of that country, in order to co-operate with Antonio de Mendoza, the viceroy, in enforcing the new laws; and as the unlimited grant of liberty to the Indians affected every Spaniard in America, the entry of Sandoval into Mexico was regarded as the prelude to general ruin. But the colony of New Spain had now been so long accustomed to regular government, that how much soever the spirit of the statutes was detested and dreaded, no attempt was made to oppose the royal pleasure by any act of violence unbecoming subjects. The magistrates and principal inhabitants contented themselves with remonstrating against the fatal consequences of enforcing such regulations. The governor and superintendent adopted the same sentiments; and Charles, swayed by the opinion of men whose abilities and integrity entitled them to decide concerning what fell immediately under their own view, granted such a relaxation of the rigour of the new laws as composed the minds of the Spaniards settled in Mexico†.

In Peru, where the people were less habituated to the restraints of law, and where the new statutes fell with more severity, the alarm was still greater, when intelligence arrived of the commission with which the viceroy was intrusted. The minds of the conquerors revolted with indignation at the idea of complying with laws, by which they were to be stripped at once of all they had earned so hardly during many years of service and suffering. As the information spread through the different settlements, the inhabitants ran together; the women in tears, and the men exclaiming against the injustice and ingratitude of their sovereign in depriving them, unheard and unconvicted, of their possessions. "Is this," cried they, "the recompense due to persons, who, without public aid, at their own expense, and by their own valour, have subjected to the crown of Castile territories of such vast extent and opulence? Are these the rewards bestowed for having endured unparalleled distress; for having encountered every species of danger in the service of their country? Who is possessed of such merit, who of a conduct so irreproachable, that he may not be condemned by some penal clause in regulations, conceived in terms as loose and comprehensive, as if it had been intended that all should be entangled in their snare?—Every Spaniard of note in Peru has held some public office; and all, without distinc-

* Id. *ibid.*† Torquemad. *Mond. Ind. lib. v. c. 13.*

tion have been obliged to take an active part in the contest between the two rival chiefs : were the former to be robbed of their property, because they had done their duty ? were the latter to be punished for what they could not avoid ?— Shall the conquerors of this great empire, instead of receiving marks of distinction, be deprived of the natural consolation of providing for their widows and children, and leave them to depend for subsistence on the scanty supply they can extort from unfeeling courtiers ?—“ We are not able now,” continued they, “ to explore unknown regions in quest of more secure settlements : our constitutions, debilitated with age, and our bodies covered with wounds, are no longer fit for active service ; but still we possess vigour sufficient to assert our just rights, and will not tamely suffer them to be wrested from us.*.”

When the minds of men were in such a ferment, some concessions, even on the side of government, were requisite to soothe them into submission : but such a plan could not be carried on without profound discernment, conciliating manners, unwearied patience, and flexibility of temper, none of which fell to the share of the viceroy. Of all the qualities that fit men for eminent stations, Vela was endowed only with integrity and firmness ; and resting on these, which in his situation were rather defects than virtues, he began to fulfil his commission, the moment he landed at Tumbez, without any regard to places, persons, or circumstances. In all the towns through which he passed, the natives were declared to be free ; every person in public office was deprived of his lands and servants ; and as an example of obedience to others, he ordered his baggage to be carried by mules in his march towards Lima ; or if any Indians were employed, that they should be men who voluntarily offered their service for hire, which he took care to see duly paid them. Amazement and consternation went before him as he approached ; and so little solicitous was he to prevent them from augmenting, that he openly declared, on entering the capital, that he came to enforce obedience to the will of his sovereign, not to relax the rigour of his laws. Arrogance of behaviour rendered still more grievous this insolence of authority. Every attempt to procure a suspension or mitigation of the new laws, was checked by an imperious frown, and considered as proceeding from a spirit of disaffection that tended to rebellion. Several persons were confined, and others put to death without any form of trial †.

In order to apply a remedy to these evils, Vaca de Castro set out from Cuzco, attended by a numerous train of the citizens, and principal inhabitants, to wait on the viceroy. On his march he received a letter from Vela, acquainting him, that his authority ceased from that moment. De Castro obeyed, and resisted all temptations thrown in his way to disturb the government, by becoming the head of a faction. He dismissed the greater part of his attendants, and requested, that such as remained might go unarmed, in order to avoid every appearance of hostilities. But notwithstanding all this moderation and humility, the viceroy or-

* Gomara, c. 152. Robertson, Hist. Americ. lib. vi.
 G. 25. Garcilasso, lib. iv. s. 5.

† Zarate, lib. iv.

dered him to be arrested at their first interview, on account of an accidental tumult, in which he had no concern; to be loaded with chains, and committed to the common jail. Incensed at this act of tyranny, the inhabitants of Lima went in a body to Vela, and remonstrated with great boldness against such an insult on a person of De Castro's rank; desiring that he might be removed to the town-house, and offering to bail his appearance to the amount of an hundred thousand pesos. The viceroy complied with their request, from fear of a general insurrection: persisted in his rigorous measures, and the people continued to plot and to cabal*.

These disturbances were not confined to Lima, they extended over all the towns in Peru, inhabited by Spaniards. This was a fit opportunity for Gonzalo Pizarro to resume his ambitious projects; and he did not neglect it. He received letters and addresses from all quarters, imploring him to avert the ruin which threatened the colony. Many of his old friends joined him, as did several soldiers that were dispersed about the country, offering to support him with the last drop of their blood. Encouraged by these favourable appearances, he repaired to Cuzco, where he was received with transports of joy by the inhabitants, who considered him as their common deliverer. In the fervour of their zeal, they elected him Procurator General of the Spanish nation in Peru, to solicit the repeal of the late regulations. They authorised him to lay their remonstrances before the royal audience at Lima; and upon pretext of danger from Manco Capac, who was then at the head of an army of observation, they impowered him to assemble a body of troops, and march thither in arms†.

Under sanction of this nomination, Pizarro took possession of the royal treasure, appointed officers, levied soldiers, seized a large train of artillery which Vaca de Castro had deposited in Guamagna, and set out for Lima, as if he had been advancing against a public enemy. The Inca's death was in some measure the cause of these open hostilities, as Pizarro could no longer pretend any danger from the Indians, who immediately dispersed. As he advanced, he was joined by Pedro de Puelles, and a considerable body of troops, whom the viceroy had sent to oppose him. A party of horse, dispatched to intercept Puelles, on information being received of his defection, also deserted to the malcontents. Rebellion had now assumed a regular form, and many persons of note resorted to the standard of Pizarro: among others, Francisco de Carvajal, whom he constituted his major-general, and proceeded towards the capital with an apparent intention of throwing off all dependence on Spain, and rendering himself absolute sovereign of Peru‡; a scheme by no means difficult in the execution at that juncture, had he made the proper use of the universal dislike to the new regulations, and convinced the people that he sought their good more than the gratification of his own ambition.

Before Pizarro reached Lima, a revolution had happened very favourable to his designs. The judges of the Royal Audience were no less dissatisfied with the

* Herrera, dec. V. lib. i. c. 1.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Ut supra.

viceroy's.

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viceroys's conduct than the people whom he was sent to govern : they joined with the citizens in soliciting a suspension of the new ordinances : Vela resolved to have recourse to arms, in order to enforce them ; and both parties were so much exasperated by frequent contests, arising from interference of jurisdiction and contrariety of opinion, that their mutual disgust soon grew into open enmity. The judges thwarted the viceroy in every measure ; set at liberty prisoners whom he had confined ; justified the malcontents, and applauded their remonstrances. The citizens rose in open rebellion in favour of the judges ; and the viceroy, become universally odious, and abandoned even by his guards, was seized in his own palace, and put on board the fleet, which also renounced his authority, to be there confined, till such time as he could be sent to Spain *.

Having thus assumed the supreme direction of affairs into their own hands, the judges issued a proclamation suspending the execution of the obnoxious laws ; and sent, at the same time, a message to Pizarro, requiring him, as they had already granted whatever he could request, to dismiss his troops, and repair to Lima with fifteen or twenty attendants, in order to concert measures for settling the government. This requisition, which was probably made with no other intention than to throw a decent veil over their own conduct, was treated by Pizarro with the contempt it deserved. The supreme authority was now within his reach, and he did not want courage to seize it. Instead of the inferior function of procurator general for the Spanish settlements, he demanded, by way of answer to the message of the judges, to be constituted governor, and captain-general of the whole province by the court of audience ; threatening, if they refused to grant him a commission to that effect, that Lima should be destroyed with fire and sword. In order to give weight to his demand, he proceeded on his march, and encamped in the neighbourhood of the city. A fresh summons was sent to the judges ; who, either from unwillingness to relinquish power, or from a desire of preserving some attention to appearances, hesitated, or seemed to hesitate, about complying : Gonzalo therefore began to erect batteries, with an intention of laying siege to the place. This produced the desired effect : the inhabitants declared against the judges, and deserted in great numbers to the camp ; and Gonzalo's army being now augmented to the number of twelve hundred men, he dispatched Carvajal with a summons, declaring if any farther delay was made, the town must suffer all the consequences of his vengeance, and the judges ascribe to their own obstinacy, the slaughter of their fellow citizens. Even this menace could not move them ; till Carvajal, impatient of delay, marched into the city by night, seized several officers of distinction obnoxious to Pizarro, and hanged them without the formality of a trial. Next morning the court of audience issued a commission in the emperor's name, appointing Gonzalo Pizarro governor of Peru, with full power, civil as well as military ; and he entered the town that day in triumph, to take possession of his new dignity, while Lima blazed with bonfires, and rung with public rejoicings †.

* Herrera, dec. V. lib. i. c. 1.
c. 19.

† Zarate, lib. v. c. 10. Garcilasso, lib. iv.

This flow of prosperity was interrupted by some events which gave great uneasiness to Pizarro. Juan Alvarez, one of the judges, to whose custody the viceroy had been committed on board a vessel, in order to be carried into Spain, was no sooner out at sea, than touched with remorse, or moved by fear, he fell at the feet of his prisoner, declaring him from that moment to be free, and protesting that he himself, and every person in the ship, would obey him as the legal representative of their sovereign. Vela desired him to steer to Tumbez; and landing there, erected the royal ensign, and resumed his authority as viceroy. He was joined by several persons of eminence, not yet infected with the contagious spirit of rebellion; and the violence of Pizarro's government soon augmented the number of his adherents, as it forced some leading men in the colony to fly to him for refuge. He took courage from the misconduct of his adversary; and entertaining hopes that Gonzalo's intolerance would soon turn the stream of popular affection, he dispatched his son-in-law into Spain, to acquaint his imperial majesty with the state of affairs in Peru, and request that speedy succours might be sent against the rebels. Meanwhile his strength increased daily, and he had the satisfaction to learn, that Diego Centeno, a bold active officer, incensed by the cruelty and oppression of Pizarro's lieutenant governor in the province of Charcas, had formed a conspiracy against his life, cut him off, and set up the royal standard*.

Though alarmed at these hostile appearances in the opposite extremes of the empire, Gonzalo was not disconcerted; but prepared to assert the authority which he had assumed, with the spirit and conduct of an officer habituated to command. He marched directly with all his forces against the viceroy, as the nearest as well as the most formidable enemy. Vela, unable to face the malcontents, retreated towards Quito: Pizarro followed him; and in that long march, through a wild and mountainous country, both suffered hardships and encountered difficulties, which no troops but those accustomed to serve in America, could have endured. The armies were frequently in sight of each other, and the royalists were forced to keep constantly in arms, during a journey of one hundred and fifty leagues, in the course of which they were chiefly nourished by herbs, roots, and other vegetables.

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The approach of the rebels to Quito, obliged the viceroy to abandon that city, which he found incapable of defence, and to retreat forty leagues beyond it; hoping that Pizarro would stop the pursuit, in order to refresh his men in a place abounding with provisions. But he found himself mistaken: the rebels scarce halted at Quito, and pushed on with so much vigour and perseverance as drove Vela to despair. When he saw a party of the enemy descending a hill near his camp, he lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, and exclaimed, "Shall it be credited in future ages, that Spaniards could pursue the standard of their king with such obstinacy, as to endure every possible hardship for the space of four hundred leagues?" meaning from Lima to the place where he was then encamped on the farther extremity of Peru. Still, however, he pursued his retreat, with

* Zarate, lib. v. c. 18. Herrera, dec. V. lib. i. c. 3.

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all the rapidity of a flight, into the province of Popayan; which determined Pizarro to return to Quito, whence he dispatched Carvajal to oppose Centeno, who was growing formidable in the southern provinces of the empire, while he himself remained in that city, in order to watch the motions of the viceroy*.

Having thus eluded the rage of his enemies, Vela was suffered to rest quiet in Popayan; where, by his own activity, and the assistance of Benalcazar, he soon assembled four hundred men; and as he retained, amid all his disasters the same elevation of mind, and the same high sense of his own dignity, he not only rejected with disdain the advice of some of his followers, who urged him to make overtures of accommodation to Pizarro, but determined to attack the rebels, now weakened by the detachment sent against Centeno, and decide the contest by the sword. With this view he marched back to Quito, where he hoped to find some friends; having eluded the vigilance of Pizarro, who had taken possession of a strong post, in order to dispute his passage: but to his astonishment, he found the place entirely abandoned by the inhabitants, on which he exclaimed, "Great God! is not this your cause, and not one good man left to defend it?"—Pizarro was no less surprised and disappointed on learning that the viceroy had changed his route, and pursued him with great rapidity as soon as informed of his course. He found the royal army drawn up in battalia before the city; and relying on the superiority of numbers, but still more on the discipline and valour of his troops, advanced resolutely to the charge. The cavalry first engaged, and fought with great courage and obstinacy; but at length the impetuosity and stubborn valour of Pizarro's veterans turned the scale, and made room for the foot to join in close engagement; for such was the extraordinary disposition of both armies, that the horse occupied almost the entire front. The royal infantry in the rear were somewhat disconcerted by the precipitate tumultuous retreat of the vanquished cavalry; but they soon rallied, and sustained the attack of the enemy with firmness and intrepidity. The viceroy fought like a private soldier, at the same time that he displayed all the qualities of an excellent general; animating, exhorting, soothing, and menacing his troops to do their duty. Victory was held for a while in suspense by his exertions; but being at last laid dead by the stroke of a battle-axe, his troops already broken by the fire of Pizarro's musketry, were seized with a panic, and routed with great slaughter. His head was cut off, and placed on the public gibbet of Quito, which Pizarro entered in triumph†.

In consequence of this decisive victory, Pizarro came into immediate possession of the whole authority. He disposed of every thing at his pleasure, punished his enemies, and rewarded his friends without controul; and whatever his influence might have been on former occasions, he certainly acted at present with prudence and discretion. Assembling the prisoners, he represented to them the power which Heaven had put into his hands; his intentions to support and protect public liberty; the fatal consequences which must have resulted from the

* Herrera, dec. V. lib. i. c. 3.
lib. v. c. 32. Garcilasso, lib. ii. c. 34.

† Id. *ibid.*

† Zarate,

establishment of the new regulations, and the crimes committed by those who abetted Vela's tyranny; after which he dismissed them with a general pardon, except a few of the ringleaders, whom he banished to Chili and the distant provinces.

Meanwhile Carvajal having pursued Centeno over mountains and wilds, without being able to bring him to a general action, though every day was productive of bloody skirmishes, at length seized upon a pass, where he thought the enemy must necessarily be surrounded, and obliged to lay down their arms; but Centeno's vigilance and activity extricated him out of this difficulty likewise, and obliged Carvajal to confess, that in the course of forty campaigns made in Italy and other countries, he had never beheld so extraordinary a retreat as that performed by Centeno, over a desert country, two hundred leagues in extent, in the face of a superior enemy. It was impossible, however, he could long maintain himself in such circumstances. He directed his march to Arqueba, where he determined to embark his troops, and proceed to Chili, if shipping could be procured. For this purpose he sent an officer before him, and a vessel bound to Chili was hired; but just as he was ready to embark, Carvajal appeared. On this unexpected event, Centeno called his men together, and told them that they must now disperse in small bodies, and shift for themselves, till affairs wore a more favourable aspect; after which he took an affectionate leave of them, and retired to the mountains, leaving Carvajal undisputed master of that part of the country*.

Every place in Peru, from the frontiers of Popayan to those of Chili, submitted to Pizarro; and by his fleet, under Pedro de Hinojosa, he had not only the unrivalled command of the South Sea, but had taken possession of Panama; whence Ferdinando Mexia, another of his officers, had surprised and placed a garrison in Nombre de Dios, on the opposite side of the isthmus, which rendered him master of the usual avenue of communication between Spain and the empire under his dominion. The crisis of his fate was arrived: he must now determine, whether he should be considered as an independent prince, or a rebellious subject; whether he should humble himself to deprecate the vengeance of that monarch, in violation of whose authority he had taken up arms, or boldly set him at defiance, and assume to himself the titles and honours of sovereign of Peru. To the last resolution he was advised by most of his officers and counsellors, but chiefly by Carvajal; who, in a letter written to him, on receiving an account of the victory at Quito, uses every argument that can be suggested on the subject, and every motive that can enforce them. "You have usurped," says he, "the supreme power in this country, in contempt of the emperor's commission to another. You have marched, in hostile array, against the royal standard: you have attacked the representative of your sovereign in the field, have defeated him, and cut off his head. Think not that any monarch will ever forgive such insults on his dignity, or that any reconciliation with him can be cordial or sincere. Depend no longer on the precarious favour of another: assume yourself the

* Id. *ibid.*

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sovereignty over a country, to the dominion of which your family has a title founded on the rights both of discovery and conquest. It is in your power to attach every Spaniard in Peru inviolably to your interest by liberal presents of lands and Indians, or by instituting ranks of nobility, and creating titles of honour similar to those which are courted with so much eagerness in Europe. By establishing orders of knighthood, with privileges and distinctions resembling those in Spain, you may bestow a gratification upon the officers in your service suited to the ideas of military men. Nor is it to your countrymen only that you ought to attend; endeavour to gain the natives. By marrying the Coya, or daughter of the Sun next in succession to the crown, you will induce the Indians, out of veneration for the blood of their ancient princes, to unite with the Spaniards in support of your authority. Thus, at the head of the principal inhabitants of Peru, as well as of the new settlers there, you may set at defiance the power of Spain, and repel with ease any feeble force which it can send to such a distance *."

Zepeda, the president of the court of audience, who had joined Pizarro, and was now become his confidential counsellor, warmly seconded Carvajal's exhortations, and employed whatever learning he possessed in demonstrating, That all the founders of great monarchies had been raised to supreme power, not by antiquity of descent, or the legality of their rights, but by their own valour and personal superiority. Pizarro listened with attention to both; but happily for the tranquillity of the world, the mediocrity of his talents confined his ambition within more narrow limits. He contemplated with satisfaction, but with awe, the vast object offered to his eye; and apprehensive of some sudden turn of fortune, instead of aspiring at independent power, he confined his views to obtaining from the court of Spain a confirmation of the authority he now possessed. For that purpose he resolved to dispatch thither Laurence de Aldana, an officer of distinction, to represent all the late transactions in the most favourable light; to assure his imperial majesty of the zeal and loyalty of Pizarro, who pretended only to justify his conduct by the extreme necessity of affairs; and to solicit the government for him, rather with a seeming view to promote the public interest, than to recompense his services or gratify his ambition. Aldana was farther authorised to promise, in the name of all the towns and cities in Peru, the repayment of whatever had been expended of the royal treasure, besides a considerable free gift, provided a general pardon was granted for past offences, and Pizarro continued in his present station †.

While Pizarro was deliberating what course he should pursue, in order to preserve his usurped authority, consultations were held in Spain, with no less solicitude, concerning the means of re-establishing the emperor's dominion over Peru. Charles himself was then in Germany, employed in conducting the war against the famous league of Smalkalde, one of the most interesting and arduous enterprises in his reign; the care of providing a remedy against the disorders in Peru,

* Garcilasso, lib. iv. c. 40. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. vi.
lib. ii. c. 2.

† Herrera, dec. V.





Therefore, devolved upon his son Philip, and the counsellors whom he had employed to assist in the government of Spain during his absence. The actions of Pizarro and his adherents appeared so repugnant to the duty of subjects towards their sovereign, that the greater part of the ministry, though unacquainted with the last excesses of outrage to which the malcontents had proceeded, insisted on declaring them instantly to be guilty of rebellion, and agreed to punish them with the most exemplary rigour. But the difficulty of raising and equipping a body of troops sufficient for that purpose, and of transporting them to a country so distant as Peru, at a time when Spain was drained of men and money by a series of wars, which still continued to rage, and while Pizarro remained master of the South Sea, caused the scheme suggested by the ardour of loyalty to be laid aside as impracticable. Nothing then remained, but to attempt by lenient measures, what could not be effected by force. Though Aldana's instructions were not yet known in Spain, it was evident from Pizarro's former dispatches, that he still retained sentiments of veneration for his sovereign, or found his situation so insecure, that he judged the royal protection necessary to his safety. In either case, a prospect equally favourable to government was opened: he might be reclaimed to his duty, by moderation and forbearance; or his followers be induced, by certain concessions, to withdraw their support from his usurped authority, and return to their allegiance.

Thus did the Spanish ministry reason. The measures to be pursued were now evident to every one, but another difficulty still remained; the means of carrying them into execution. Who was equal to a negotiation so delicate and important, the success of which must rest entirely on the abilities of the man to whom it was committed?—Several persons were proposed; and after weighing their comparative merit with much attention, the choice was unanimously fixed upon the licentiate Pedro de la Gasca, then of the supreme council of the inquisition at Valencia. He had been occasionally employed by government in affairs of trust and confidence, and had conducted them with no less skill than success; displaying a gentle and insinuating temper, accompanied with firmness, and a cautious circumspection in concerting measures, followed by what is seldom its attendant, much vigour in executing them. These qualities marked him out for the station he was now destined to fill. The emperor, who was not unacquainted with the talents of Gasca, warmly approved of the choice; and the licentiate, notwithstanding his advanced age, and feeble constitution, did not hesitate a moment in complying with the will of his sovereign. His commission and instructions were accordingly drawn up. He would accept of no higher title than that of President of the Court of Royal Audience in Peru; and to avoid giving alarm to the malcontents, he desired that he might go, like a minister of peace, with his gown and breviary, and without any retinue but a few domestics*.

But, amid all this apparent moderation and humility, Gasca demanded the most unlimited powers, which Charles granted to the full extent of his wish.

* Zarate, lib. vi. c. 6. Robertson, Hist. America, book vi.

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His commission authorized him "to pardon all crimes, even high-treason; to reward such as had signalized themselves in the king's service, and to bestow titles of honour on them; to appoint governors, and fill up other vacant employments, till such time as the king should order otherwise, he giving an account of the merits of such persons; to make ordinances with the advice of the inhabitants conditionally, that they should be confirmed by his majesty; to execute all that had been given in charge to the viceroy, Blasco Nugnez Vela, as far as might be for the service of God and the king; to execute justice and try causes between and against all persons whatsoever, without exception; to banish all turbulent churchmen, till such time as a bull should be obtained from the pope for punishing them corporally; to dispose at pleasure of the royal revenue for the reduction of the country, with the advice of any two of the royal judges, and the king's officers." All viceroys, governors, and other persons, were commanded to support and obey him, and the city of Panama was ordered to be subordinate to the court of Peru. In regard to his salary there was no limitation, the officers of the revenue being directed to furnish him with whatever he had occasion for*.

Highly satisfied with this fresh proof of his sovereign's confidence, Gasca hastened his departure, and without either money or troops set out to quell a formidable rebellion. When he arrived at Nombre de Dios, he found Ferdinando Mexia posted there, to oppose the landing of any hostile forces; but Gasca appeared in such a simple guise, with a train so little formidable, and a title which excited no terror, that he was received without jealousy, and even with respect. From Nombre de Dios he advanced to Panama; and met with a similar reception from Hinojosa, whom Pizarro had entrusted with the government of that city, and the command of his fleet stationed there. In both places he held the same language, declaring that he was sent by his sovereign as a messenger of peace, not as a minister of vengeance; that he came to redress all their grievances; to revoke the laws that had excited alarm; to pardon past offences; and to establish order and justice in the government of Peru. His mild deportment, the simplicity of his manners, the sanctity of his profession, and a winning appearance of candour, gained credit to his declarations; and Mexia, Hinojosa, and several other officers of distinction, to each of whom he applied separately, were gained over to his interest, and waited only for some decent occasion of declaring openly in his favour. Hinojosa in particular, whom he solicited to deliver up the fleet to him, only excused himself by saying, that he could not do it with honour, before he heard whether Pizarro and his associates would obey the king's orders, because it would be declaring them rebels, to enhance his own loyalty; but protested, in case they proved obstinate, that he would not blemish the reputation of his ancestors, who had always been true subjects, by standing out against his sovereign†.

Having thus far happily succeeded in his negotiations, Gasca determined to know how the news of his arrival were relished in Peru. For this purpose he dis-

* Herrera, dec. V. lib. ii. c. 2.

† Herrera, dec. V. lib. ii. c. 3.

patched Pedro Hernandez Ponagua, a gentleman of great penetration and address, to Lima, with a letter from the emperor, and another from himself to Pizarro. His majesty condescended even to cajole the usurper; acquainting him That, being informed of the disturbances excited in Peru by the viceroy's too rigorous execution of the new regulations, and persuaded that whatever Pizarro and his party had done was intended to promote the public benefit, and support the honour and interest of the crown, he had dispatched the licentiate Gasca, in quality of president, with full powers to terminate all differences, redress all grievances, and do whatever might contribute to the improvement of this valuable conquest, and the welfare of his subjects there, whether Spaniards or natives. He required Pizarro to assist the president with his advice and influence; and concluded with assuring him, That the important services performed by himself and his family should ever be held in grateful remembrance. Nor was the president's letter less respectful. He blamed the severity and inflexibility of the viceroy, and declared his belief, that his majesty did not ascribe the late civil commotions to disobedience or disloyalty, but to the necessity of circumstances, which obliged Pizarro and his friends to act on a principle of self-preservation. He appeared not at all surprised at the opposition to the new laws, by reason of the rigour with which Vela had required their execution. "The most wholesome nourishment," said he, "may be converted into poison by being improperly administered. His majesty hath now sent me to quiet the minds of the people, by a revocation of those laws, according to the prayer of your petition, with power to publish a general pardon for all crimes and misdemeanors already committed. I am enjoined to consult the people, and be guided by their opinion, with respect to the proper measures for promoting the interests of religion and the welfare of the colony." He exhorted Pizarro to take these matters into serious consideration, and shew his gratitude to his sovereign for restoring him to the enjoyment of all his estates and possessions, after actions which another prince would have thought deserving of the severest punishment. "Your ancestors," continued Gasca, "have distinguished themselves by their services; they have rendered themselves illustrious by their loyalty: it ought to be your ambition to imitate their example in the most distinguished manner, that you may not tarnish their lustre and lineage by your defection from their virtues. Next to the salvation of our souls, our greatest care ought to be the preservation of our honour; the smallest blemish on which is perceivable in lucid bodies moving in your exalted sphere, and reflecting light on all things around them. The foulest spot, after disobedience to the King of heaven, is treason against your country, and rebellion against your earthly sovereign. He is God's vicegerent, and appointed by him to preserve order and good government in society. Let me advise you, therefore, to weigh those things with impartiality and prudence, and to reflect upon the power of your king, whose forces you are very unable to withstand: but lest your unacquaintance with his court, and your ignorance of the strength and number of his armies, should betray you into an unjust estimate of your comparative force, figure to yourself the puissance of the Great Turk, who
marched

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marched in person at the head of three hundred thousand fighting men against the imperial army; came within sight of it, and retreated with precipitation, without daring to give battle *.

Meanwhile Pizarro being informed of Gasca's arrival at Nombre de Dios, and of the nature of his commission, hastened the departure of Aldana for Europe with his dispatches; directing him, by the way, to require the president to return into Spain, and to put him into the hands of Ferdinando Mexia, with secret instructions to murder him in the passage †. These instructions Aldana communicated to Hinojosa, on finding Gasca at Panama. Amazed at Pizarro's precipitate resolution of setting himself in opposition to the emperor's commission, and disdaining to be his instrument in executing the odious crime pointed out to Mexia, the admiral publicly recognized the president as his only lawful superior. The officers under his command did the same. Mexia also declared, that he held Nombre de Dios for the crown; and such was the contagious influence of example, that it even reached Aldana, and Gomez de Solis, who had been joined with him in commission. Hinojosa was continued in his rank of admiral, and Aldana appointed commodore; so that Pizarro, at the very time when he expected to hear of Gasca's return, if not of his death, received an account of his being master of the fleet, Panama, and Nombre de Dios, aggravated by the defection of his deputies.

This intelligence reached Lima almost at the same time with the president's letter, and threw the malcontents into the utmost consternation. A council was immediately summoned, and warm debates ensued. Carvajal, now sensible of Pizarro's unsteady temper, recommended to him a speedy submission to his sovereign, as the safest measure: and when Gasca's letter was read, "By our Lady!"—exclaimed he, in that stile of buffoonery that was familiar to him,—“the priest issues gracious bulls. He gives them both good and cheap; let us not only accept of them, but wear them as reliques about our necks.” Zepeda was of a direct contrary opinion: he alledged, that all the president's promises were insidious, in order to prevail on them to lay down their arms, and then condemn them to suffer the punishment of rebels. Pizarro inclined to the same way of thinking, and not only denied Gasca permission to enter Peru, before he should be confirmed in the government, but irritated almost to madness at the revolt of his fleet, and the other unexpected events with which it was accompanied, began the most vigorous preparations for war. In the space of a few days he mustered near a thousand men in the city of Lima, all veterans, well armed, and provided with horses and slaves for carrying the baggage; so that they were capable of marching with great celerity to whatever quarter they might be destined. Nor was this his whole strength. He sent detachments to Cuzco, La Plata, and other places, commanding proclamation every where to be made, that the president had exceeded the king's orders, in seducing his forces, and attempting to embroil in

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* Garcilasso, lib. v. c. 5. Gomara, c. 176.
lib. ii. c. 2.

† Herrera, dec. V.

civil war a country which had just begun to taste the blessings of peace and tranquillity; that the royal commission did not empower Gasca to supplant him in his authority: it only constituted him president of the council, with instructions to pursue the most pacific measures; and as he had already exceeded his powers, Pizarro urged, that the people were concerned no less than himself to check a growing ambition; for if Gasca succeeded in his designs, they must expect to be plundered and dispossessed of all that wealth which they had acquired with so much toil and bloodshed, and perhaps meet with imprisonment, tortures, and death, as the reward of their services*.

In order to justify still farther these hostile preparations, a formal indictment was drawn up by the advice of Zepeda, and a process commenced against the president before the court of audience in Lima. A similar prosecution was carried on against the admiral, Nonojosa, for betraying the fleet, against the deputies, and all the other officers, who had deserted from Pizarro. Evidences were accordingly examined, and the crimes of treachery, breach of the peace, and robbery were proved on oath against the officers: it was also proved, that Gasca had received effects illegally, knowing them to have been Pizarro's, and appropriated them to his own use. On this, the president, and all the officers who had deserted Pizarro's service, were declared traitors by Zepeda and the other judges, acting in virtue of the royal commission†.

Gasca in the meantime was not idle. Perceiving that force must be employed in order to accomplish the purpose of his mission, he was assiduous in collecting troops from Nicaragua, Carthagená, and the other Spanish settlements on the continent, and was so successful in his endeavours, that he was soon in a condition to dispatch Aldana with four ships, and a considerable body of troops, to the coast of Peru. Their appearance excited a dreadful alarm; and tho' Aldana did not attempt for some time to make any hostile descent, he performed more essential service by setting ashore persons at different places, who made known the tenor of the president's commission, the revocation of the late edicts, and the act of general indemnity; in consequence of which desertion became so common, that Pizarro soon found his army considerably diminished. All who were dissatisfied with his violent administration, and all who retained any sentiments of duty to their sovereign, now meditated revolt, while such as had lain concealed in mountains and caves began to emerge from their obscurity. Among these was Centeno, who in the course of a few months raised eight hundred men for the crown in the province of Charcas, and made himself master of the cities of La Plata and Cuzco‡.

Astonished as Pizarro was at beholding one enemy approaching by land, and another by sea, at a time when he expected to find all Peru united in his favour, he was neither appalled nor disconcerted. As the danger from Centeno's operations was most urgent, he instantly set out to oppose him; and his army being provided as already mentioned, he marched with surprising celerity. Every

* Herrera, dec. v. lib. iii. c. 1.

† Zarate, lib. vi. c. 16.

‡ Id. ibid.

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morning, however, he found his force diminished by the numbers that had left him during the night; and though he took every precaution, and exercised every severity, to check the rage of desertion, he could not muster above four hundred soldiers, when he came within sight of the enemy at Huarina, near the lake Titicaca. But those he justly considered as men of tried attachment, on whom he might depend. They were indeed the boldest and most desperate of his followers; men, conscious like himself of crimes for which they could hardly expect forgiveness, and whose only hope was in the successful efforts of their valour. He did not hesitate, at the head of these determined veterans, to face Centeno, and a body of troops more than double the number of his own. Both armies were drawn up with great military skill; but especially Pizarro's, that important business devolving upon Carvajal, whose talents as a commander were as worthy of admiration as his cruelties were detestable. His orders were to wait the enemy's attack firmly, till they came within sure reach of shot, and then to pour in a vigorous fire upon them. In order to provoke the royalists, he sent Acosta with a party of musqueteers to insult their front, and instructed him to keep up a retreating fight; all which was executed with such punctuality, that Centeno was insensibly drawn into an engagement, and seduced to expend his shot before it could take effect. This manœuvre more than counterbalanced the superiority of numbers. Pizarro's soldiers timed their fire so judiciously that near an hundred and fifty of the royalists fell at the first discharge; the second put all in confusion and dismay: most of Centeno's officers were killed or wounded, and the infantry was entirely routed in less than half an hour. The case was otherwise in regard to the cavalry, where the weight and superiority of numbers proved more than equivalent to valour and discipline. Pizarro's horse were borne down with the torrent, and himself in imminent danger of being killed or taken prisoner, when the victorious infantry came to his assistance; attacked the enemy in front and on both flanks, and put them to flight with great slaughter. The treatment of the vanquished was such as might have been expected from men irritated by personal injuries, and pushed to despair. The spoils of the field, and the pillage of the camp were immense, amounting to one million four hundred thousand pesos*.

Pizarro, however, did not obtain this signal victory without considerable loss. Near one hundred of his brave band were killed on the spot; but as he was now deemed invincible in the field, fresh troops daily resorted to him, and soon augmented his army to double its former number. Besides, a road was now opened to the heart of the empire, a happy turn given to the spirits of the people, and a wide field offered to his ambition. He advanced towards Cuzco; made his triumphal entry, with great pomp, into that city; sent detachments upon different expeditions, and seized the king's treasures, to an incredible value at La Plata, while the unfortunate Centeno was making the best of his way to Lima,

* Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 79. Herrera, dec. V. lib. iii. c. 4.

over rugged mountains and barren deserts, attended only by a priest, who had shared in his calamities, and assisted in his escape *.

CHAP. X.
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But events happened, in other parts of Peru, which preponderated over all the advantages that Pizarro derived from his victory at Huarina. Scarce had he left Lima, when the citizens, weary of his tyrannical dominion, erected the royal standard, and Aldana, with a detachment of soldiers from the fleet, took possession of the town. About the same time the president landed at Tumbes with five hundred men, and Benalcazar took possession of Quito, where Puelles, Pizarro's general in that province, was slain by one of his officers, who inclined to the president. The situation of the two parties was now perfectly reversed: while Cuzco and the adjacent provinces were possessed by Pizarro, all the rest of the empire, from the frontiers of Popayan, acknowledged the jurisdiction of Gasca, whose behaviour still continued to be gentle and unassuming. Full of affability, lenity, and complacency, he expressed, on every occasion, his ardent wish of terminating the contest without bloodshed. The people were won by his insinuating carriage, and as his numbers daily increased, he was encouraged to advance into the interior part of the country †.

Meanwhile Pizarro, intoxicated with the success which had hitherto attended his arms, and elated with having again near a thousand men under his command, remained in Cuzco with as much security as if the war had already been finished. Carvajal perceived the bad effects which must attend such a conduct, and laboured with all his eloquence to induce Gonzalo to seize the strong posts in the enemy's way, evacuate the city, and take the field with activity and spirit. When advice arrived of Gasca's approach he redoubled his solicitations; but the insatuated Pizarro suffered the royalists to pass all the rivers that lie between Guamanga and Cuzco without opposition, and to advance within four leagues of that capital, flattering himself that a defeat in such a situation as rendered a retreat impracticable would at once make him undisputed master of Peru. Carvajal, on the contrary, sensible that the enemy's strength was great, insisted on distressing them by marches and countermarches; dividing their forces; and attacking them separately, when no opportunity offered of assisting each other; and on finding his advice rejected, he declared that he gave up all for lost. Pizarro, however, confident of victory, drew out his troops, and intrepidly marched to meet the royalists, in the valley of Xaquixaguana ‡.

The appearance of the two armies, as they advanced slowly to the charge, was very remarkable: in Pizarro's, composed of men enriched with the spoils of the most opulent country of America, every officer, and almost all the private soldiers, were clothed in stuffs of silk, or brocade, embroidered with gold and silver; and their horses, their arms, their standards, were adorned with all the pride of military pomp. Gasca's, though less splendid, exhibited a spectacle no less striking; he himself, accompanied by the archbishop of Lima, the bishops of

April 9,
A. D. 1548.

* Zarate, lib. vii. c. 4. Herrera, dec. V. lib. iii. c. 4.
c. 1. † Herrera, dec. V. lib. iv. c. 2.

‡ Zarate, lib. vii.

Quito and Cuzco, and a great number of inferior ecclesiastics, marching along the lines, blessing the men, and encouraging them to a resolute discharge of their duty *!—When both armies were ready to engage, Garcilaso de la Vega, an officer of distinction, deserted to the royalists, and was received with open arms by the president. His example was followed by Zepeda, the person in whose fidelity Pizarro placed the highest confidence. He advanced under pretence of examining the disposition of the enemy, put spurs to his horse, and suddenly joined them. The revolt of persons of such high rank struck all with amazement: mutual confidence ceased at once, and distrust and consternation became general. The royal camp was soon crowded with Pizarro's soldiers, who all declared they had seized the first opportunity of escaping and testifying their loyalty. The whole left wing of the musketeers went over to the president in a body. A desertion so uncommon seemed to render fighting unnecessary; Gasca therefore laid aside the design of giving battle, either because he had no great confidence in troops that had already betrayed their general, or because he did not chuse to drive a handful of men to despair, who, if left to themselves, would probably join him. He was not deceived in this last conjecture. The pikemen, who only remained with Pizarro, seeing the desperate state of his affairs, threw down their arms, declared their resolution not to fight against their king, and made the best of their way for the royal camp. Perceiving all irretrievably lost, Pizarro exclaimed, in astonishment, to a few officers who still faithfully adhered to him, "What remains for us to do?"—"Let us rush," replied one of them, "on the enemy's firmest battalion, and die like Romans." But Gonzalo, dejected by such a sudden reverse of fortune, wanted spirit to follow this gallant advice, and tamely surrendered to Pedro Villavicencio, who commanded one of the enemy's out posts. Carvajal was taken prisoner in endeavouring, at the age of eighty-five, to make his escape by the swiftness of his horse†.

Gasca's lenity after this bloodless victory was equal to his moderation before it. Pizarro, Carvajal, and a few other distinguished offenders, only were condemned to suffer death. The rest were pardoned, or but slightly punished. Pizarro, when brought into the presence of Gasca, vindicated his measures with becoming boldness; claimed all that he aspired to as his undoubted right; hinted at the ingratitude of the court to his family, but never dropt a disrespectful expression of his imperial majesty. He was beheaded the day after the battle, and submitted to his fate with a composed dignity. The end of Carvajal was suitable to his life. When introduced to the president he maintained a contemptuous silence, and on his trial he scorned to make any defence. "One can die but once," said he, when his sentence was pronounced;—"and a man of my age, even in more prosperous circumstances, can leave little behind him to occasion a sigh." Nothing, in a word, could be more extraordinary than the behaviour of this hoary soldier from the time of his imprisonment to his execution. He discovered no

* Zarate lib. vi. c. 11. Robertson, Hist. Amer. lib. vi. lib. iv. c. 2. Zarate, lib. vii. c. 7.

† Herrera, dec. V.

sign either of remorse for the past or solicitude about the future, but indulged himself in the same sarcastic vein of mirth and gross pleasantry as at any other period of his life; and dismissed, with admiration of his wit and fortitude, those who came to visit him from motives of curiosity, or with a view to take vengeance for the injuries they had received, by insulting his misfortunes*.

The malcontents, in every corner of Peru, laid down their arms on the death of Pizarro; but before public tranquillity could be re-established on any solid foundation, it was necessary to find employment for the multitude of daring adventurers with which the country was filled, and to reward those who had particularly assisted in suppressing the rebellion. To these objects Gasca applied himself with the greatest attention. For the better dispersing of the army, governors were appointed to all the cities in the empire †, and new expeditions projected. By these means no inconsiderable portion of the mutinous and inflammatory spirit, so much to be dreaded, was drained off, as the hopes of bettering their condition induced many of the most indigent and desperate soldiers to follow the standards of different leaders into remote provinces or undiscovered regions.

The gratification of the loyalists was an affair of more difficulty. While the vanity or avarice of every individual fixed the value of his own services, it was impossible to satisfy all; though the allotments of lands and Indians which fell to be distributed, in consequence of the death or forfeiture of the former possessors, exceeded two millions of pesos of yearly rent ‡. Gasca listened to the claimants with the most patient attention, and that he might have leisure to weigh their several pretensions, he retired with the archbishop of Lima, and a single secretary to Quayarima, a village twelve leagues from Cuzco. There he spent several days in proportioning the several shares; and that he might get beyond the fierce storm of clamour and rage, which he foresaw would break out on the publication of his decree, notwithstanding the impartial equity with which he had framed it, he set out for Lima, leaving the instrument of partition sealed up, with orders not to open it for some days after his departure. It was accompanied with the following letter. "I have," said he, "made repartition of an hundred and fifty commandaries, agreeable to the justest notions I could acquire of merit and long faithful services; and I shall, in the same manner, bestow whatever shall become vacant during my stay in Peru. Those who are not now rewarded, may depend upon being afterwards provided for. Let me beseech you therefore to consider, not what you or I would wish to enjoy, but what I have in my power to bestow. I have omitted nothing to serve you: immense donations have been made, in which I have no share; many more will fall within my province to bestow: rest then satisfied in my decree, and believe that I am sensible it is the duty of a Christian to repay obligations, and the interest of a ruler to secure the affections of the people by acts of justice and liberality §."

* Garcilasso, lib. v. c. 39.
lib. iv. c. 4.

† Herrera, dec. V. lib. v. c. 3.
‡ Herrera, dec. V. lib. v. c. 3.

§ Garcilasso,

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The dissatisfaction occasioned by the publication of the decree was such as Gasca had feared. It broke out with all the fury of military insolence. Those who had always remained firm in their allegiance, were incensed that such as had joined Pizarro should have any share in the forfeitures, or even retain their own possessions. Calumny, threats, and curses, were poured openly out on the president, while emulation, envy, and rage, agitated the breasts of the disappointed claimants. Of these the most clamorous was Francisco Hernandez Giron. He accused Gasca of ingratitude, partiality, and injustice; and as he had suffered very much by the rebellion, and was an officer of known valour and reputation, all the malcontents looked up to him as their head. But not judging it prudent at that time to stand forth in defence of their common wrongs, Giron went to Lima, under pretence of avoiding the solicitations of the factious soldiers, in order to represent his services to the president. Gasca received him respectfully; disregarded all the accusations of his enemies; and vested him with a command, which put it still more in his power to complete his ambitious projects*.

A. D. 1550.

In the meantime the president laboured with the utmost assiduity to compose the minds of all men, and to re-establish the regular administration of justice in every part of the empire. He introduced order and simplicity into the mode of collecting the royal revenue; and he issued regulations concerning the treatment of the Indians, well calculated to protect them from oppression, and to provide for their instruction in the principles of the Christian religion, without depriving the Spaniards of the benefit accruing from their labour†. Having, by these wise and humane regulations, restored universal tranquillity to Peru, and reserved, by the prudent œconomy of his administration, thirteen hundred thousand pesos of public money, after paying all the expences of the war, Gasca resolved to return to Spain, as every object of his mission seemed now fully accomplished. In this resolution he was confirmed by the arrival of dispatches from the emperor, commanding him to suppress entirely the personal service of the Indians. He saw the disturbances that would ensue from enforcing such orders; and therefore committed them, together with the government, to the court of audience, and embarked with the treasure for Panama. He also delivered to the judges a decree for the repartition of such estates as had become vacant since the former distribution made at Quayarima, with instructions not to publish it till after his departure, that he might escape the clamours and the persecution of the dissatisfied claimants‡.

When Gasca arrived at Panama, he received a letter from the emperor, thanking him for his services, and informing him that his imperial majesty had appointed Don Antonio de Mendoza to the government of Peru, with the title and ensigns of viceroy. This gave great satisfaction to Gasca, as Mendoza had governed New Spain for many years with singular prudence, his moderation and

* Id. *ibid.*
dec. V. lib. vi. c. 3.

† Herrera, dec. V. lib. v. c. 4.

‡ Herrera,

abilities being equally conspicuous. Meanwhile Peru was exposed to fresh disturbances. The judges no sooner published the second partition of lands, than all was uproar and confusion in Lima. The disappointed claimants reviled the president, cursed their own hard fortune, and called aloud for vengeance on the authors of their wrongs. These disorders were increased by the injudicious endeavour to enforce the new edict, exempting the Indians from all personal service. The judges required, That the natives should no longer be compelled to work in the mines, to carry burdens, or perform any other kind of work; and insisted that their service should not only be voluntary, but that they should be paid a daily stated price for their labour. A fresh alarm was spread, and an insurrection immediately appeared in Cuzco. The malcontents again placed Giron at their head, and their numbers increased to such a degree, that the tumult was suppressed with the utmost difficulty.

Giron being taken prisoner was sent to receive judgment at Lima; but the court of audience, overawed by the popularity of his character, durst not presume to call him to trial*. He was therefore dismissed, and rendered more insolent by this proof of the feebleness of government. The disturbances daily increased, and all law and order seemed to be abolished, when Antonio de Mendoza arrived at Lima. Though the viceroy's bad state of health prevented him from visiting in person the different cities within his government, that important business was not neglected. He immediately dispatched his son Francisco, to examine into the discontents which prevailed in Cuzco, and to proceed from thence to Charcas and the more distant provinces. By the vigilance of Francisco, and the activity of the magistrates, the tumult in Cuzco was at that time suppressed, and Peru delivered from one of the most dangerous insurrections which had distracted it since the establishment of the Spanish government.

After this fortunate service, Alonso set out for the province of Charcas, where he examined every thing with the most curious eye; took plans of the towns; made draughts of the mines of Potosi; established several necessary regulations in the different provinces through which he passed, and returned to his father at Lima with an account of his progress and transactions. From Lima he was dispatched to Spain, in order to lay his draughts and plans before his imperial majesty, and give an exact account of the state of Peru. Soon after his departure the viceroy died much regretted by all who valued the interest of their country, or knew the importance of a moderate, wise, and upright magistrate†.

In consequence of this fatal event, the government again devolved upon the judges of the court of audience. No sooner were they in possession of power, than they revived the decree for releasing the Indians from personal service, which had been prudently suspended during the administration of Mendoza. Unpopular as this regulation appeared, the judges always endeavoured to enforce it, as often as the administration came into their hands, and now required its execution with unusual rigour. An alarm ran through all the provinces, and a spirit

CHAP. X.
A. D. 1550.

A. D. 1551.

A. D. 1552.

* Id. *ibid.*

† Herrera, dec. V. lib. ix. c. 1.

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A.D. 1552.

of sedition every where appeared, especially in the province of Charcas, where the labour of the Indians was indispensably necessary to the working of the mines, till such time as a proper number of negroes could be provided. Crowds of discontented Spanish settlers, and disbanded soldiers, there assembled; in hopes of receiving countenance from Nonojosa, the governor, who was deeply affected by the edict, in regard to the service of the Indians. From some expressions which he had formerly dropt, they imagined he would now act independently, and claim the power formerly usurped by Gonzalo Pizarro; but Nonojosa's ambition being gratified by the government of Charcas, where he possessed an immense estate, he determined to support the royal authority, agreeable to the duty of his employment, without risking so large a fortune in the criminal and dangerous pursuit of supreme power.

The malcontents soon discovered that they would be disappointed in their sanguine expectations from the governor, and therefore determined to cut him off, in order to obviate any difficulties which he might throw in the way of their rebellious projects. They accordingly chose for their leader Don Sebastian de Castilla, son to the earl of la Gomera, and spoke publicly of their designs; but Nonojosa obstinately refused to listen to the informations daily lodged of a conspiracy against his life. He could not persuade himself that soldiers, among whom he was so popular, and who had hitherto appeared devoted to his service, could so suddenly alter their affections, as to assassinate the leader whom they lately seemed to adore. Deluded into a fatal security by this liberal way of thinking, he never provided guards, or took the least step for the safety of his person: all his attention was directed towards the preservation of the public peace; so that the conspirators had full leisure to mature their horrid plot. On the day fixed for their bloody purpose, they entered Nonojosa's palace in the morning, without resistance, rushed into his chamber, and dispatched him with many wounds; then running into the streets, cried aloud, "The tyrant is dead. Long live the king *!"---intimating, by these expressions, that they were enemies to the governors of the country, but not rebels against their sovereign.

Having finished this part of their business, no less important than atrocious, the conspirators plundered Nonojosa's palace, massacred some of the principal citizens, whom they suspected to be adverse to their designs, and seized their effects. This success encouraged them to proceed more openly. They assembled all the inhabitants in the market place by beat of drum; proclaimed their leader, Don Sebastian, governor and chief justice of the province, and appointed officers both civil and military. In a few days they gained possession of the rich mines of Potosi, and the town in its neighbourhood, where they found two millions of pesos, the property of the king, of the late governor, or of private persons. They also detached a party to seize upon la Paz, and murder the marshal Alvarado, who commanded in that city; but before their scheme was accomplished, fortune took a sudden turn, and divided the conspirators amongst

* Id. *ibid.* Fernandez, lib. ii. c. 19.

themselves.

themselves. Part of Nonojosa's foldiers began to reflect on the consequences of fuch violent proceedings, and even to repent of the murder of their general; a crime which they refolved to expiate by fhedding the blood of Don Sebastian, to whose ambition they now afcribed their own guilt. They accordingly fet about this new act of treachery with the utmoft confidence; chofe Bafco Godinez, one of the chief malcontents, for their leader, and murdered the general whom they had lately proclaimed with fo much oftentation, appointing Godinez to all his employments *.

A military government now entirely prevailed in the fouthern part of Peru. Godinez obliged the magiftrates of La Plata to give fanction to the appointment of the foldiers, and confirm him not only in the dignity of captain-general, but of chief juftice in the province of Charcas. In virtue of this authority, he acted with uncontrouled power; put all to death who were the objects of his jealousy or resentment; caufed feveral of the confpirators, engaged in the murder of Nonojosa, to be executed; and put on the appearance of extraordinary zeal for the king's fervice; intimating, that he had been forced to the rebellion, and had pushed forward to thofe employments which he now held, with no other view, than that of fupporting the jurifdiction of the royal court. Even the perfons with whom he was moft intimate, his accomplices in the death of Sebastian, and his warmeft friends felt the rod of power; being either publicly executed as traitors, or privately affaffinated, in order to prevent them from difcovering his complicated crimes, and difappointing him by that means, of thofe rewards which he expected for his vigilance in behalf of the government.

But Godinez, with all his cruel cunning, fell a facifice to fuperior craft. The judges of the court of audience, to whom he had reprefented his fervices, being fufficiently informed of his treafons, appointed the mareschal Alvarado governor of the province of Charcas, with full power to act as he fhould fee moft for the honour of his imperial majesty. Alvarado, fenfible of the difficulty of fubduing Godinez by open force, had recourfe to artifice. He made it be fignified to the malcontents, that he had orders to reward all who had been inftrumental in fuppreffing the rebellion of Sebastian, and particularly to beftow a large eftate upon Godinez, which, though immensely valuable, was deemed too fmall a recompence for his important fervices. Every thing fucceeded to Alvarado's wifh. The deluded Godinez confidering thefe declarations as fincere, neglected to afsemble his followers, was feized, condemned, and executed, together with moft of his officers †.

The death of Godinez, and the vigour of Alvarado's government, reftored tranquility to the province of Charcas; but his feverity excited univerfal indignation, and foon gave rife to new diforders. The two laft rebellions had been fomented by the principal citizens of Cuzco, who poffeffed large fhares in the mines of Potosi, now lying unwrought on account of the royal edict, which required that the fervice of the Indians fhould be altogether voluntary, and

* Ut Supra.

† Herrera, dec. V lib. ix cap. 1.

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A. D. 1552.

which their native indolence rendered equal to an actual prohibition of their labour. The Spaniards in general were incensed at the rigour with which the judges enforced this law, as well as at the violent proceedings against the rebels; and the citizens of Cuzco not only took part in the general resentment, but were afraid lest in the course of the prosecutions daily set on foot, and the punishments no less frequently inflicted, their own secret practices might be discovered. In order to avert the ills they dreaded, as well as to procure relief from those they experienced, fourscore citizens drew up a petition to the court of audience, requesting that the edict relative to the service of the Indians might be recalled, and a stop put to those violent criminal prosecutions, which were beheld with horror by every one, not entirely dead to the feelings of humanity. This petition the governor of Cuzco tore, under a frivolous pretence of informality, when it was presented to him for his approbation; a circumstance which gave so much offence to the persons chiefly concerned, that they laid the foundation of a general revolt.

A. D. 1553.

At the head of these disaffected citizens was Francisco Hernandez Giron, who eagerly longed for an opportunity of gratifying his insatiable ambition, not in the least impaired by repeated disappointments. He waited the issue of the revolt in the province of Charcas before he declared himself; and being informed that Alvarado, who had suppressed the sedition there, maintained a correspondence with Ramierez, governor of Cuzco, and was concerting measures for destroying him and his friends, he resolved to anticipate their designs, by breaking out into open rebellion. With this view he assembled his associates, acquainted them with their danger; revealed all the intelligence he had received concerning the intrigues carried on by Alvarado and Ramierez; aggravated every circumstance; and affirmed, that Alvarado's design was to strike at Cuzco, the root of all the evils of which he complained as soon as he had lopped off the branches of Charcas. He exhorted them, therefore, to enter upon vigorous measures for their own preservation, and not tamely to suffer unjust punishments under colour of law. The cause was general, he observed, to all the Spanish planters: all were interested in opposing an edict which rendered their mines useless, and their estates an incumbrance if they were deprived of the labour of the Indians; and he assured them, that they would be joined by the whole colony, as soon as it was known they had taken up arms to redress a grievance so generally and so severely felt.

As this assembly consisted chiefly of citizens who were proprietors of mines or estates, or of soldiers of desperate fortune, whose only resource was in some new disturbance, little persuasion was necessary to engage them in a measure to which they were already sufficiently disposed. They eagerly closed with Giron's proposal, and offered to undertake the execution of any plan which he should suggest for resisting the tyranny of their oppressors. A happy opportunity offered for making themselves masters of Cuzco. The governor and principal magistrates were invited to the wedding of a wealthy citizen, which was to be celebrated with great magnificence. When the day came, Giron, with twelve of the

most

most desperate of his associates clad in armour, rushed into the bridegroom's house, while the company was at supper, killed such of the magistrates as attempted resistance, and made the governor prisoner*.

This bold action threw the citizens of Cuzco into the utmost consternation, no man knowing whom to trust, or to whom he might safely communicate his sentiments, as the number of the rebels seemed hourly to increase. After having proclaimed liberty in the market-place, where all the inhabitants were ordered to assemble on pain of death, Giron seized upon the royal treasure; appointed officers to command his troops, and made open declaration of war; protesting at the same time, that he had nothing in view but the public good. He complained that all remonstrances to the court of audience were contemptuously rejected, and that nothing remained but to seize upon the supreme authority, until the situation of affairs could be properly represented to his imperial majesty. Meanwhile he insisted it was necessary to have a representative, or chief justice, for the city and kingdom; and such was his influence, or the pusillanimity of the magistrates, that they appointed him to that office, with full powers to petition for a redress of grievances. Guamanga, Arequipa, and other towns congratulated him on his elevation, and begged to be admitted into the confederacy†.

Nov. 27.

Intelligence of this insurrection no sooner reached Lima, than the judges issued orders to suspend the execution of the edict relative to the personal service of the Indians, to which was chiefly to be attributed the public discontents. At the same time Alvarado was constituted general of the forces in the southern provinces, which were ordered to march towards Cuzco; and a resolution was taken to assemble an army in the neighbourhood of Lima, to join that of Alvarado. In order to prevent those who had been engaged in the late rebellions, and dreaded punishment, from throwing themselves into the arms of the malcontents, a general pardon was proclaimed to all who had fought under the ensigns of Gonzalo Pizarro, Sebastian, and Godinez, provided they would immediately enlist in the royal army, and serve against the enemies of their king and country. By that time, however, Giron was so strong, that he had marched to Pachacama, in his way to Lima, in order to give battle to the royalists. There he received intelligence of the approach of the enemy, and was preparing to bring matters to a speedy issue, when a desertion among his troops obliged him to remove to a greater distance. In his retreat he was pursued by Paolo de Menesses, who had orders to harrahs his retreat with a considerable detachment, both of horse and foot; but this officer being too confident, was drawn into a snare, and defeated; before the main body of the royalists could come up to his relief‡.

A. D. 1554.

This victory, though by no means decisive, was of the utmost consequence to Giron; affording him not only leisure to augment his army, but putting an entire stop to the desertion, by infusing new spirits into his troops. The moment that fortune declared in his favour, he was joined by such a number of followers as

* Herrera, dec. V. lib. ix. c. 2.
dec. V. lib. ix. c. 4.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Herrera,

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A. D. 1554.

May 20.

emboldened him to advance to Nasca, on the sea-coast, about sixty leagues to the northward of Lima; while Alvarado having assembled a thousand Spaniards, and ten thousand Indians, began his march from Charcas, and took possession of Cuzco. There being joined by several detachments, he thought himself a sufficient match for the rebels, and set out in quest of Giron, who did not decline the combat. The two armies met near Guallaripa, where Alvarado was totally routed in attempting to force the rebel camp, strongly stationed on the banks of the river Abancay. Above four hundred of the royalists were killed or wounded, and three hundred made prisoners, while Giron had only seventeen men slain, and forty wounded *. The booty was immense, exceeding any thing ever seen before, even in that rich country. The most opulent planters in Peru served in Alvarado's army, and had equipages suitable to their overgrown fortunes: every thing was adorned with gold, silver, and precious stones; and so certain were they of victory, that some preparations had actually been made for a magnificent triumphal entry into Lima.

Had Giron known as well how to improve as to gain a victory, he might now have extorted a confirmation of that authority which he had usurped. But instead of taking advantage of the enemy's confusion, by pursuing them when broken and dispirited, or endeavouring to make himself master of Lima, by a rapid march thither, he remained five or six weeks inactive in his impregnable camp; contenting himself with sending detachments to Cuzco, Arequipa, La Paz, and other cities, to plunder and despoil without limitation or restriction. Many of the citizens of Cuzco were not only stripped of their estates, but deprived of their lives. Scarce a house escaped the fury of the soldiers. The affection of the people was converted into enmity. They now perceived, that Giron's aim was not to defend the rights and property of the Spaniards, but to acquire the power of pillaging his countrymen with impunity.

This change in the sentiments of the capital determined Giron to march to the pleasant vale of Yuca, where he spent his time in rural sports, till advice arrived that the royalists, augmented to near two thousand men, were advancing towards Cuzco, with a fine train of artillery, and a numerous army of loyal Indians. He then retired to Pacara, a strong pass, about forty leagues south of the capital, where he posted his army in such a manner as rendered an attack extremely hazardous. This was his peculiar province. No general was ever more fortunate in the choice of ground for encampments than Giron. His wings and front were rendered inaccessible by rivers, woods, rocks, and morasses; and behind he was secured by a deep rapid stream, which, however, did not obstruct his communication with the adjacent country. As a farther advantage, he commanded, by this station, the province of Charcas, and thereby rendered himself master of the treasures of Potosi. His troops were not only regularly paid, but such a fund was laid up as might have enabled him, as far as money was concerned, to prosecute the war for a series of years.

* Herrera, dec. V. lib. ix. c. 4.



Wm. J. G. J. G.

BATSES, *or* JANGADES *of the* PERUVIANS.

Meantime the royal army, headed by the judges, passed the rivers Abancay and Apurima, in spite of the parties dispatched by Giron to dispute the banks; pursued their march through Cuzco; advanced towards Pacara, and encamped within sight of the rebels, in an open plain, where the cavalry might have room to act. Giron flattered himself that the enemy's superiority in numbers would induce them to attack him as formerly; but they prudently resisted all the provocations that he offered, and plainly shewed that they had profited by experience. For several days the two armies watched each other, without any attempt on either side to come to a general engagement. At length, however, encouraged by his constant superiority in skirmishing, and a report that the caution of the judges proceeded from diffidence of the fidelity of their soldiers, Giron determined to attack the royal camp by night; but his design was betrayed by his own troops, among whom desertion began to prevail, and he was repulsed after an obstinate conflict. Desertion became general before morning; and Giron, attended by a few friends, was obliged to seek shelter in the mountains. He was pursued by a detachment of the royalists, seized, condemned, and executed. With him expired the spirit of civil dissention among the conquerors of Peru*.

No sooner were the Spaniards at peace with each other, than they began to turn their eyes towards the natives. It was discovered that Tapac Amaru, grandson of Manco Capac, the only male descendant of the Incas, kept his court in the mountains, in order to avoid the slavish bondage imposed on the rest of his countrymen. Means were contrived to draw him from his retirement; and this guiltless heir of empire fell a sacrifice to the jealous policy of that execrable tyrant Philip II. and the Peruvians sunk, without distinction, into that humiliating state in which they still remain.

C H A P. XI.

A View of the Government, Laws, Religion, Arts, and Manners, of the ancient Mexicans and Peruvians.

AS the Mexicans and Peruvians were the only people in America, who, at the time of its discovery, had made any considerable advances in civilization, it will be proper to take a view of their progressive improvements, before we proceed to the history of the rude tribes, or of the Europeans settled in the New World.

The Mexican empire, according to tradition, was originally possessed by small independent tribes of wandering savages, who lived entirely by hunting, and who were ignorant of all the conveniences of social life. But about a period corresponding to the year 900 in the Christian æra, several tribes, more

* Herrera, dec. V. lib. x. c. 1, 2.

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civilized, arrived from unknown regions towards the north and north-west, and settled in the different provinces of Anabac, the ancient name of New Spain, but chiefly in the neighbourhood of the great lake. As the original inhabitants were strangers to agriculture, they resigned, without reluctance, the vallies to the new settlers, who taught them in return many useful arts. Cities and villages were reared, and some advances made towards government and subordination*. At length, about three hundred years after the first migration, arrived the Mexicans, a people more polished than any of the former, who are supposed to have migrated from the borders of the Californian gulph. As all the country round the great lake was already occupied, they were obliged to have recourse to stratagem and force, in order to obtain footing in that fertile plain. Certain islands in the lake were granted them: these they united by bridges; filled up great part of the lake with timber and stone-work; and there, by very early proofs of their genius and industry, raised the foundation of the famous city of Mexico, the noblest monument of human ingenuity in the New World.

The Mexicans, like most other tribes in the infancy of society, continued for some time to be governed in peace, and conducted in war, by such among them as were distinguished for their wisdom or valour; but as they had established no regular plan of government, the inconveniencies arising from civil dissensions and foreign attacks, which they were unable to prevent or resist, induced them at last to vest the supreme authority in a single person. The power of the Mexicans soon increased under their kings; especially during the reign of Izcoatl, their fourth sovereign, who may properly be deemed the father of the monarchy, as he subdued all the cities in the neighbourhood of the lake, and founded those famous causeways, which afterwards rendered the capital so illustrious. Other princes added to these acquisitions and improvements; and the empire arrived, by degrees, at that height of grandeur in which we have beheld it on the invasion of the Spaniards, when Montezuma II. the ninth sovereign who had swayed the Mexican sceptre, was upon the throne†.

Such is the tradition of the Mexicans concerning the progress of their own empire; according to which its duration appears to have been very short. Nations seldom err in this particular; yet we must either assign an higher antiquity to the Mexican monarchy, or reject the splendid descriptions which have been given of the government and manners of the people. Allowing the Spanish writers, however, to have been guilty of exaggeration, in some particulars, many incontestable evidences remain of an improved state of society among the subjects of Montezuma. The right of private property was perfectly understood, and established in its full extent. The distinction between real and moveable possessions, between property in land and property in goods, had taken place. Both might be transferred from one person to another by sale or barter, and both might descend by inheritance. Every person who could be denominated a free man had property in land, which was held by different tenures, as in Europe.

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 2. Acosta, lib. vii. c. 8.

† Id. ibid.

A separation of arts and professions also had taken place to a considerable extent. The functions of the mason, the weaver, the goldsmith, the painter, and several other crafts, were carried on by different persons, each of whom was regularly instructed in his particular calling, and to it alone confined his industry. Regular markets were held in the cities, which were numerous, large and populous, where the mutual wants of the people were supplied, and the produce of their various labours brought into commerce*.

From the separation of professions we are naturally led to the distinction of ranks, which was yet more perfectly established in the Mexican empire, and affords a still less equivocal proof of an advanced state of society; for in the infancy of civil life men, conscious of equality, are impatient of subordination, and pre-eminence is only acquired by personal merit and accomplishments. How different the form of society among the subjects of Montezuma!—The great body of the people were in a most humiliating state. A considerable number of them, known by the name of *Mayeques*, were considered as instruments of labour attached to the soil, and were conveyed, together with the lands on which they were settled, from one proprietor to another, in the same manner as the *Villains* or territorial slaves, during the prevalence of the feudal system. Others were reduced to the lowest form of subjection, that of domestic servitude, and the condition of such as were free was little more to be envied: they were considered by their haughty lords as beings of an inferior species, and treated accordingly. The condition of the nobles, as in all governments, was elevated in proportion to the abasement of the people. They were divided into different classes, to each of which peculiar titles of honour belonged, and they possessed ample territories for the support of their rank. Some of their titles, like their lands, descended from father to son in perpetual succession; others were annexed to particular offices, or conferred during life as marks of personal distinction. Exalted above all, and enjoying extensive power and supreme dignity, was placed the monarch. A line of regular subordination being thus established, reaching from the highest to the lowest member of the community, each knew what he could claim, and what he owed. The people, who were not allowed to wear a dress of the same fashion, or to dwell in houses of a form similar to those of the nobles, accosted them with the most submissive reverence; in the presence of their sovereign they durst not lift up their eyes from the ground, or look him in the face: even the nobles, when admitted to an audience of the emperor, entered barefooted, in mean garments, and paid him homage approaching to adoration†.

The Mexican monarchs, however, notwithstanding this profound respect, and the representations of some Spanish writers, were by no means absolute masters of the lives and fortunes of their subjects, before the reign of Montezuma II. whose aspiring ambition subverted the ancient system of government, and introduced a pure despotism. On the contrary, the jurisdiction of the crown was extremely

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 5, 6. Gomara, c. 79.

† Herrera, dec. II.

lib. v. c. 4. lib. x. c. 4. dec. III. lib. i. c. 6. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. vii.

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limited. All real and effective authority, as in a feudal kingdom, was retained in the hands of the nobles, and the shadow of it only left to the sovereign. Jealous to excess of their own rights, the nobility guarded with most vigilant anxiety against the encroachments of their princes, while they held the people in the lowest state of subjection. By a fundamental law of the empire it was provided, that the king should not determine concerning any point of general importance, without the approbation of a council, composed of the nobility of the four first orders *. Without their consent he could not engage the nation in war; nor could he dispose of the most inconsiderable branch of the public revenue at pleasure: it was appropriated to certain purposes, from which it could not be diverted by the royal authority; and in order to secure the full effect of these constitutional regulations, the Mexican nobles did not permit the crown to descend by inheritance. It was disposed of by election. The right of election seems originally to have been vested in the whole body of the nobility, if not of the free men of every denomination; but under Izcoalt, the fourth Mexican monarch, it was committed to six electors; namely, the kings of Tezeuco and Tacuba, and four princes of the blood royal. Respect for the reigning family made the choice generally fall upon some person sprung from it; but as valour and abilities were of the utmost consequence among a turbulent and martial people, more regard was generally had to merit and mature age, than to the order of birth or vicinity to the throne †. This maxim in their policy, which appears to have secured to the Mexicans a set of able and warlike princes, in some measure enables us to account for that extraordinary height of power and grandeur to which their empire had attained, when invaded by the Spaniards, even allowing its duration to be less than two centuries.

The pomp of Montezuma's court, and the means by which it was supported, have already been described ‡; and after making ample allowance for the fond admiration with which they were beheld, and painted, by Cortez and his companions, they will still be found to resemble more the magnificence and splendour of oriental monarchy, than the rude simplicity of the infant states in the New World. But, as a learned historian very justly remarks, it was not in the mere parade of royalty that the Mexican potentates exhibited their power ||: they manifested it more beneficially in the order and regularity with which they conducted the internal administration and police of their dominions. Besides the council of state, already mentioned, there was a council or board for the management of the royal revenue; a council of war, which regulated every thing relative to the army; a supreme council of justice, and a board of trade and commerce. The supreme tribunal of justice resided at Mexico, and consisted of twelve judges, who determined all appeals from the inferior courts, and gave a final verdict, unless the emperor thought proper to interpose. The towns and provinces had their proper judges and officers, who heard the parties,

* Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 4.
p. 148.

† Acosta, lib. vi. c. 2, 4.

‡ Chap. V.

|| Robertson, Hist. Americ. book. vii.

and decided causes. Their decisions were summary and verbal: both sides appeared with their claims and witness; and judgment was immediately given, except when the point in litigation appeared too intricate for the determination of the court, in which case it was remitted to the supreme tribunal at Mexico. Custom and the institutions of their ancestors usually regulated the decrees of the judges, as they had no written laws to guide them. Murder, theft, adultery, and even the appearance of treason, or the slightest instance of disrespect to the religion of the country, were punished with death. All other crimes were easily pardoned, except corruption in office, which was also deemed a capital offence*.

The council of war nominated all inferior officers; issued out the pay to the soldiers; took care that the army was properly supplied with provisions and all other necessaries; and recommended to the royal notice such officers as had distinguished themselves in the public service by their courage or capacity. As the government was in a great measure military, the soldiers were more favoured than any other class of people. Wherever troops resided, they were distinguished by particular privileges and immunities; and military orders, with badges of honour, were instituted as rewards to those who had eminently signalized themselves by their valour†. This was an admirable contrivance to excite emulation; and the honours thus offered were the more eagerly sought after, as they were never conferred on the unworthy. Signal services alone gave a title to those dignities. It was even necessary, that the exploits of which they were the rewards, should be acknowledged by the whole army, before the persons so distinguished could procure respect or esteem.

The council of trade and commerce was strictly united to that of the revenue. They conferred together on the means of rendering the impositions on commodities most advantageous to the crown, and least oppressive to the subject. The board of trade examined all projects offered for the benefit of commerce; promoted them, if approved of, and rejected them if found inadequate to the purposes intended. They also adjusted and regulated all differences among merchants, and rated the market-prices of all commodities‡. The attention of the Mexican government extended even to such regulations in police as polished nations are late in establishing. Among these may be numbered the institution of public couriers, stationed at proper intervals, to convey intelligence from one part of the empire to another, a refinement, as already observed, not introduced at that period into any European kingdom; the appointment of a considerable number of persons to clean and light the streets, and to patrol as watchmen during the night.

From the genius of their religion, which was gloomy and atrocious, some unfavourable inferences have been drawn, concerning the civilization of the Mexicans. But this is a fallacious way of estimating the character of a people; for nations, long after their ideas begin to enlarge, and their manners to refine, adhere to systems of superstition founded on the rude conceptions of early ages,

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 16. Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 4.

† Id. *ibid.*

‡ Herrera, dec. II. lib. v. c. 6. De Solis, lib. iii. c. 16.

and continue rites and ceremonies which equal in absurdity and barbarity those of the savage state. Such was the superstition of the Mexicans. Their religious tenets, and the rites of their worship, as described by the Spanish writers, were wild and cruel in an extreme degree. Their divinities were clothed with terror, and delighted in vengeance: they were exhibited to the people under detestable forms, which created horror: fear was the only principle which inspired their votaries. Fasts, mortifications, penances, and human sacrifices, were the means employed to appease their wrath; and no worshipper approached their altars without sprinkling them with blood drawn from his own body*.

One thing however is remarkable, amid all these dark rites, and is a proof of the advanced state of society among the Mexicans: religion, which occupies but an inconsiderable place in the mind of a savage, was formed by them into a regular system, with its complete train of priests, temples, victims, and festivals. The great temple dedicated to the idol Viztziputzli, or the God of War, has been already described†. The next in dignity was that dedicated to Tezcatliputca, the God of Penance and Remission of Sins, which was ascended by eighty stone steps, and had on the top an area one hundred and twenty feet in breadth. These two temples were in the nature of cathedrals, all the rest being as it were parish churches, and chapels. The idol Tezcatliputca was made of black stone, as bright as jet, and richly adorned with gold, silver, and jewels. In his left hand he held a fan of beautiful feathers, issuing from a plate of gold, so finely burnished that it resembled a looking glass; importing, that he saw, through that mirror, all that was done in the world. In his right hand he had four darts, to denote the punishments which he inflicted on the wicked for sin; and his shrine was adorned with human skulls and bones, characteristic of his presiding also over famine and pestilence‡.

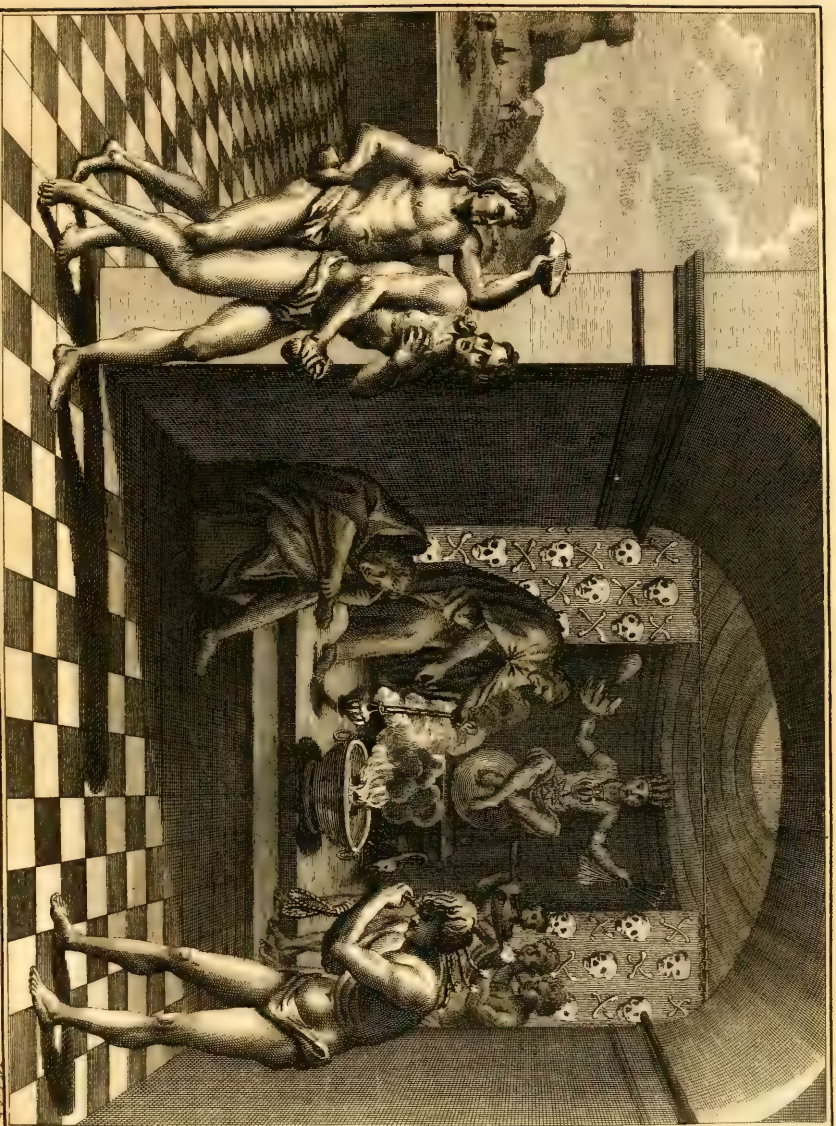
Marriage among the Mexicans was connected with religion. The preliminary articles being adjusted, the contracted pair appeared in the temple, where one of the priests founded their inclinations, by certain ceremonial questions, appointed by law for that purpose; after which he took the tip of the woman's veil with one hand, and a corner of the man's garment in the other, and tied them together, in order to signify the interior tie of their affections. Nor did this ceremony complete their union: they returned to their habitation, under this emblem of the nuptial state; visited the domestic fire, attended by the same priest; went round it seven times, and then sat down to receive an equal share of the heat, after which the marriage was thought to be completed. The portion brought by the bride was registered in a public instrument, that every part of it might be faithfully restored, in case of a separation; which frequently took place, as the law laid no restraint on inclination, mutual consent being judged sufficient cause for a divorce. After the nuptial tie was dissolved, and the parties separated, the boys became the care of the father, and the mother was enjoined to provide

* Acosta, lib. v. c. 14. Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 3.

† Chap. v. p. 145.

‡ Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 3.

THE CAUTIONARY, the MEXICAN GOD of VENGEANCE and REMISSION of SINS.



for the girls; and it was made a capital offence ever again to cohabit or unite, that a due restraint might be laid on caprice, and the sudden transports of anger *. Thus, notwithstanding the natural fickleness of the people divorces were extremely rare, and more instances of conjugal affection were to be seen in Mexico, than in most other countries. The danger incurred by attempting cohabitation after the dissolution of the nuptial tie, was sufficient to prevent the wedded couple from giving way to slight sallies of repentment, while any sparks of mutual tenderness remained; and the law thought it unreasonable and cruel, to oblige two persons to inseparable union, who entertained for each other only sentiments of disgust.

As soon as the child was born, it was carried to the temple with great solemnity, and received by a priest, who pronounced a grave and pathetic oration on the troubles and miseries to which it was doomed, on entering on this scene of existence. In the right hand of infants of distinction the priest put a sword, and in the left a shield, to express the military life to which they were destined. Mechanical instruments were put into the hands of male children of plebeian extraction, and the females of every degree were adorned with the spindle and distaff, intimating the proper occupation of the more tender sex. This ceremony being ended, the infants were brought up to the altar; where, after drawing some drops of blood from the privy parts with a lancet of flint, they were dipped in water, while certain invocations were repeated over them †.

The progress of the Mexicans in the liberal and mechanical arts has been considered as the most decisive proof of their superior refinement; but notwithstanding all the panegyrics of Cortez and the early Spanish writers, if we may judge by such specimens of their ingenuity as have been preserved in the cabinets of the curious, they appear to have produced nothing worthy of a polished people. Their so much boasted efforts in painting and sculpture are uncouth representations of common objects, or very coarse images of the human and some animal forms. But their ornaments in gold and silver are deserving of admiration, if we consider the rude tools with which they were formed; and their paintings, though contemptible as works of art, become curious as well as interesting objects of attention, when contemplated as the records of their country. The Mexicans were but imperfectly acquainted with the noblest and most beneficial of human inventions, that of writing. They expressed their ideas by *things*, not *words*: an image was offered to the eye, not a symbol to the understanding. They delineated the objects which they wished to represent. A few singular specimens of this picture-writing have been preserved, by which it appears, that the Mexicans had made some advances towards the allegorical symbol; and in one instance, the notation of numbers, they even attempted to exhibit ideas which had no corporeal form. For this purpose, they had invented artificial marks, or *signs of convention*, by which they computed the years of their kings reigns, as well as the account of tribute to be paid into the royal treasury ‡.

* De solis, lib. v. c. 17. Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 3.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Robertson, Hist. America, book vii.

Their mode of computing time may be regarded as a more perfect evidence of the progress of the Mexicans in improvement. They divided their year into eighteen months, each consisting of twenty days, amounting in all to three hundred and sixty; but as they observed, that the course of the sun was not completed in that time, they added five days to the year. These, which were properly intercalary days, they termed *supernumerary* or *excess*; and as they did not belong to any month, they were devoted wholly to festivity and pastime. The tradesmen left off work, and the shops were shut up; the business of the tribunals ceased, and even the sacrifices in the temples. Every one seemed anxious how to waste that overplus of time.

Besides the division of the year into days and months, the Mexicans had an intermediate division of time into weeks, each of which consisted of thirteen days, with particular names, marked in their kalendar by certain images. Their age consisted of fifty-two years, or four weeks of years, the distribution of which was highly ingenious. They drew a large circle, which they divided into fifty two degrees, allowing one year to each degree. In the centre stood the image of the Sun, from which proceeded four rays of various colours, equally dividing the circle, and leaving thirteen degrees to each semi-diameter. These divisions were calculated to represent the signs of their zodiac, upon which their ages had their revolutions, and the sun his aspects, prosperous or adverse, according to the colour of the descendent ray. In a larger circle, inclosing the other, they noted with their hieroglyphical signs and characters, all the accidents and occurrences of the age, worthy of being transmitted to posterity*.

With these speculations, to which men in a rude state never turn their thoughts, the Mexicans blended an absurd mixture of superstition. They believed that the world was in danger of being destroyed, when the sun had completed the course of those four greater weeks; and when the close of the period arrived, all the people prepared themselves for that dreadful and ultimate calamity. On the last night of the fifty-second year, they bid farewell to the light of the sun with tears and moans: they extinguished their fires; broke their household goods, as unnecessary lumber; neglected their food, and abandoned themselves to their fate. Thousands might be seen walking about the fields, agitated by the most violent transports of despair, till they knew whether they were to be forever consigned to the regions of darkness. On the approach of morning, they began to recover their spirits, anxiously turning their eyes towards the east; and they saluted the first rays of the rising sun with all their musical instruments, with hymns and songs, which expressed their tumultuous joy. They congratulated each other that a new age was begun, and that they should no more be exposed to a similar danger for the space of fifty-two years, then crowded to the temples to return thanks to their gods by sacrifices, and to receive from the priests new fire; the whole day being spent in public rejoicings, dancing, and other diversions dedi-

* De Solis, lib. iii. c. 17. Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 4.

cated to the *renewal of time*, in much the same manner as the Romans celebrated their Secular Games *.

None of the Mexican institutions was more worthy of admiration, or more expressive of the character of a polished people, than that which regarded the education of youth. Public schools were erected for the children of plebeians, and colleges, or seminaries of a superior order, for the sons of the nobility. The mode of education was adapted to the peculiar genius of the child, and the station of life in which he was to act. There were masters for every different branch of education, for children, boys, and youths. These had the authority of the emperor's ministers, and were justly regarded in that important light, as they formed those principles and qualifications, which fitted men for the service of the public. One of the first branches of education was to decypher those signs and characters of which their kalendar, and historical register was composed, and to recite by memory those songs, which celebrated the gallant actions of their ancestors, and the praises of their gods. In the next superior class they were instructed in the principles of moral duty, mutual obligation, and mutual complaisance. The masters appointed for this purpose were of greater reputation and abilities than the former, as their office was more important: it required them to be eminently skilled in the human heart, and fully practised in the means of contending with the violence of youthful inclinations, and headstrong passions. When the youths attained what was deemed a sufficient moral knowledge, and were supposed to be able to bend their desires to reason, they passed on to the third class, where they employed themselves in robust exercises, and were taught to govern vigour by dexterity and address. They exercised their strength in carrying weights, and in wrestling: they vied with each other in leaping and running, and were instructed in the use of arms; to best advantage how to handle the sword, to throw the dart, and, with force and exactness, to shoot the arrow. They were inured to hunger, thirst, fatigue, and hardened against the inclemencies of the weather. When they returned home to their parents, they were engaged, according to the report which their masters made of their inclinations and capacities, in civil, military, or religious functions †.

These are the most striking particulars in the manners and policy of the Mexicans, which point them out as a people fast advancing towards refinement, and polished in comparison of their savage neighbours. The Spanish writers have no doubt embellished some of their descriptions, especially in regard to the magnificence of the Mexican buildings, which appear to have been slight and rude, if we may credit those who have viewed their ruins; but few historical facts can be ascertained by evidence more unexceptionable, than may be produced in support of the principal articles in the account of the Mexican manners and institutions. Eye-witnesses relate what they saw, and men of such different professions that objects must have appeared to their view under every aspect; soldiers,

* Id. *ibid.*

† De Solis, lib. iii. c. 16. Herrera, dec. II. lib. x. c. 4.

lawyers, priests, all concur in their testimony. The strongest evidence, however, arises from the inability of those men to frame a fictitious system of policy, so well combined and so consistent, as that which they delineate in their accounts of the Mexican government. Who among the destroyers of this great empire, to use the bold language of Raynal, was so enlightened by science as to be equal to such a task? or where could they have borrowed the idea of many institutions in legislation and police, to which, at that period, there was no parallel in Europe?—The unanimous testimony of contemporary writers, and of their immediate successors, ought to be regarded as the strongest historical demonstration that can be demanded.

The Peruvian empire boasts an higher antiquity than that of Mexico: it had subsisted, according to the traditionary accounts collected by the Spaniards, four hundred years, under twelve successive monarchs; but as the Peruvians were totally unacquainted with the art of writing, the knowledge of their ancient story which they could communicate to their conquerors must have been both imperfect and uncertain; for their Quipos, or knots on cords of different colours, so much celebrated by authors fond of the marvellous, appears to have been no more than a device for rendering calculation more expeditious and accurate. By the various colours different objects were denoted, and by each knot a distinct number*; but as by these knots, however varied or combined, no moral or abstract idea, no operation or quality of the mind could be represented, they contributed little towards preserving the memory of ancient events and institutions. Very small credit therefore is due to the minute details which have been given, by Garcilasso and others, of the exploits, the battles, the conquests, and private character of the early Peruvian monarchs. We can rest upon nothing in their story as authentic, but on a few facts, so interwoven in the system of their religion and policy as preserved the memory of them from being lost; and upon the description of such customs and institutions as continued in force at the time of the conquest, and fell under the immediate observation of the Spaniards.

Peru, like the rest of America, was originally possessed by small independent tribes, differing from each other in manners, as well as in their forms of rude government; but all so little civilized, if the traditions concerning their mode of life, preserved among their descendants may be credited, that they may be classed among the lowest order of savages. Strangers to every species of industry, and even unacquainted with those sentiments and obligations that form the first bonds of social union, they are said to have roamed about naked in the forests, with which the country was then covered, more like beasts than men; gratifying their appetites, without discrimination, with the first woman that offered, allaying their hunger with the spontaneous productions of the earth, and reposing during the night in some rock or cave.

While the Peruvians continued to struggle, after the elapse of several ages, with all the hardships inseparable from this barbarous state, and when no circum-

* Acoña, lib. vi. c. 8.

stance seemed to indicate any extraordinary effort towards improvement, a man and a woman, known by the names of Manco Capac and Mama Ocollo, clothed in decent garments, appeared, we are told, on the banks of the lake Titicaca, and declared themselves the children of the Sun, sent by their beneficent parent, who beheld with pity the miseries of the human race, to instruct and reclaim them. Who these extraordinary personages were, whether natives of Peru, enlightened by their own sagacity, or emigrants from some country more civilized, tradition has not informed us; but as they took advantage of the superstitious veneration of the Peruvians for the Sun, and not only pretended to be the offspring of that glorious luminary, but to deliver their instructions in his name and authority, several of the dispersed savages united together at their persuasion, and receiving their commands as heavenly injunctions, followed them to Cuzco, where they settled, and began to lay the foundations of a city.

Having thus collected some wandering tribes, and formed that social union, which, by multiplying the desires and uniting the efforts of the human species excites industry, and leads to improvement, Manco Capac instructed the men in agriculture, and other useful arts, while Mama Ocollo taught the women to spin and to weave. By these means subsistence became less precarious, and life was rendered more comfortable. Manco Capac next turned his attention towards introducing such laws and policy as might perpetuate the happiness of the rude people of whom he had taken charge. By his salutary instructions, the spirit of which shall be afterwards explained, the various relations in private life were established, and the duties resulting from them prescribed with such propriety, as gradually formed a barbarous people to decency and manners; and the functions of persons in authority were so precisely defined, and the subordination of those under their jurisdiction maintained with such a steady hand, that the society in which he presided soon assumed the form of a regular and well governed community*.

Such, according to tradition, was the origin of the empire of the Incas, or lords of Peru. At first its extent was small. The territory of Manco Capac did not reach above eight leagues from Cuzco; but within its narrow limits, he exercised absolute and uncontrolled authority. His subjects, however, had no cause to complain of his severity: like that great fountain of light and heat which he taught them to worship, and from which he pretended to deduce his lineage, he was continually employed in dispensing blessings towards them; in cherishing and animating them in their natural and moral duties. After a long and happy reign, finding his strength declining, and the torch of life almost extinguished, he assembled his family, and his chief subjects at Cuzco, and in a long and solemn harangue, which he called his last Will and Testament, recommended to his son and heir a tender regard for his people, and to the people loyalty, zeal, and obedience to their sovereign and the laws. In private, he admonished his children to remember, in all their proceedings, that they were descended from the

* Garcilasso, lib. i. c. 7, 8, 9, &c.

Sun, and to do nothing unworthy of their divine origin; to adore this glorious luminary with the veneration becoming children, who owed every blessing to the author of their being; to obey his laws and precepts, that their subjects, in imitation of their example, might the more readily be induced to worship the deity. He exhorted them to engage the Peruvians by acts of piety, lenity, and clemency, as the surest bond of their fidelity; assuring them, that those monarchs who founded their power upon the dread of their subjects, were neither happy nor truly respectable*.

Sinchi Roca, the son and successor of Manco Capac, not only exercised the same absolute authority over his subjects, but inherited the same legislative genius. It was in his reign that the Peruvian empire, which he had considerably extended, was divided into four quarters, called *Tavantinsuya*, representing the four quarters of the heavens; east, west, north, and south, of which the city of Cuzco was made the centre. It was also ordained, that these greater divisions should be parcelled out into smaller districts, the inhabitants of which should be registered and classed in decuries, or tithings, over each of which a superior or decurion was to preside. Thus ten families constituted the minutest division of the people. Five of those, or fifty families, composed an higher class, over which was a proper magistrate; and two of the last divisions formed a third class, called an hundred. In this manner the number increased to the division of a thousand families, which was the highest class. Every decurion was enjoined to provide, that no family within his jurisdiction wanted the necessaries of life or the means of industry. He was also appointed to inspect into their moral conduct, and to report to his superiors any crimes or misdemeanours of which they were guilty, as well as such actions as deserved praise, leaving to them the proportioning of rewards and punishments, except in cases of a trivial nature. The superintendent of a thousand made his report to the minister of the Inca; so that the sovereigns of Peru, in consequence of these regulations, were at all times perfectly acquainted with the state of their provinces, the number of their subjects, and the supplies proper to be required of them†.

The most striking circumstance in the Peruvian government was the influence of religion upon its genius and institutions. The Inca appeared not only as supreme legislator, but as the minister of heaven: his precepts, therefore, were received not merely as the injunctions of a sovereign, but as the commands of the deity. The royal race, as already observed, was held to be sacred; and in order to preserve it distinct, and uncontaminated by any mixture of inferior blood, the sons of Manco Capac married their own sisters, and no person was ever admitted to the throne who could not claim it by such a pure descent. To those *Children of the Sun*, as they were called, the people looked up as to beings of a superior order; and it was considered not only as an act of rebellion, but of impiety, to oppose the will of the Inca. His authority was, of course, unlimited and absolute, in the most extensive meaning of the words. The persons of

* *Id. lib. i.*† Garcilasso, *lib. ii. c. 5.*

highest rank in his dominions, humbled with an apprehension of their natural, as well as political inferiority, never appeared in his presence without a burden upon their shoulders, as an emblem of their servitude, and of their willingness to bear whatever he should think proper to impose upon them. Force was on no occasion necessary to second his commands, obedience being regarded as a duty of religion: the officer intrusted with them might therefore pass from one end of the empire to the other, without meeting the smallest opposition; and as a farther motive to submission, on producing a fringe from the royal Borla, an ornament peculiar to the reigning Inca, the lives and fortunes of the people were at his disposal*.

Another consequence immediately resulting from this connexion between religion and government, and from establishing the latter on the basis of the former, was, That all crimes, being considered as insults offered to the Deity, not as transgressions of human laws, were punished capitally. Without distinction between such as were slight, and such as were atrocious, each called for vengeance, the blood of the offender being deemed the only expiation; and conformable to the same ideas, punishment followed the trespass with inevitable certainty, because an offence against Heaven could not be pardoned by man†. This severity might have been apt to multiply crimes among a people of corrupted manners, by rendering them ferocious and desperate, but among the Peruvians, equally under the influence of religious, moral, and political restraints; where parents were made answerable for the trespasses of their children before a certain age, and magistrates for the irregularities of those under their jurisdiction, it was attended only with salutary effects. Over-awed by the dread of punishment, which they were taught to consider as the unavoidable vengeance of Heaven; and prompted to their duty by their veneration for sovereigns, enlightened and directed as they believed, by the divinity whom they adored, all orders of men were strict observers of the laws, and even of the slightest decorums of society; so that the number of public executions in Peru was incredibly small, notwithstanding the rigour of the legislature.

Means were also taken, in some instances, to remove the motive to the offence. Of this one remarkable example is recorded the reality of which we cannot doubt, as there was at that time no institution of the kind amongst the inhabitants of Europe. It was observed that the modesty of the Peruvian women, which appears to have been greater than their chastity, led them to practice abortion, to murder, or expose their natural children; all which offences were capital. In order to remedy this evil, which the severity of the law was not able to check, the sense of shame being found stronger than the dread of death, one of the Incas caused a cavity to be made in a wall, and issued a proclamation, commanding single women labouring under such apprehensions, to deposit their children there, and they should be brought up at the expense of the state, without any inquiry being made concerning the parents.

* Zarate, lib. i. c. 13. Robertson, Hist. America, lib. vii.

† Garcilasso, lib. 2. c. 6.

BOOK I.

Proper persons were accordingly appointed to call frequently at that place, and to carry such children as they found to an house or hospital appointed for nursing them. When reared, they were employed in the public service, and the end of the law was fully answered as far as it regarded the women *.

As the severity of the Peruvian laws was softened by certain salutary institutions, the despotism of the government was qualified by that mild religion on which it was founded. The Sun, as the great source of light, of joy, and fertility in the creation, attracted their chief adoration; the moon and stars, as co-operating with him, were entitled to secondary homage; and their rites and ceremonies, as might be expected, in a worship directed to that glorious luminary, which is the emblem of divine beneficence, were innocent and humane. They offered to the Sun a part of those productions which his genial warmth had called forth from the bosom of the earth, and reared to maturity; they sacrificed, as an oblation of gratitude, some of the animals who were indebted to his influence for nourishment; and they presented to him choice specimens of those works of ingenuity, which his light had guided the hand of man, in forming, but they never stained his altars with human blood, believing it impossible that he could be delighted with such horrid victims †. The national character of the Peruvians was accordingly more gentle than that of any people in America, and the authority of the Incas, though unlimited, never degenerated into tyranny. Conscious that the submissive reverence of the people flowed from their belief of his heavenly descent, the sovereign was continually reminded of a distinction which prompted him to imitate that beneficent power which he was supposed to represent, while his subjects willingly yielded the implicit obedience which the constitution required, without being depressed by the idea of a forced subjection. The Incas were regarded as the fathers, and guardians of their people; and the upright conduct of twelve successive monarchs, among whom there was no oppressor, seems to have entitled them to these affectionate appellations.

The genius of the Peruvian religion influenced even their military operations: The Incas carried on war with a spirit very different from that of the other American nations. They did not fight like savages, to destroy and exterminate, or like the Mexicans, to glut blood-thirsty divinities with human sacrifices; but in order to reclaim and civilize those who submitted to their arms, and by that means to diffuse the knowledge of their own arts and institutions. The Incas accordingly took the people whom they subdued under their protection, and admitted them to a participation of all the advantages enjoyed by their original subjects. Considering the homage paid to any object except the heavenly powers which they adored as infamous, they were fond of gaining proselytes to their favourite system. Hence the vanquished people were not only treated with lenity, but carefully instructed in the religious tenets of their new masters, that the victorious Inca might have the honour of augmenting the number of the

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. x. c. 1.

† Garcilasso, lib. ii. c. 4.

wtaries of his father the Sun; and the idols of every conquered province were carried in triumph to the great temple at Cuzco, and there placed as trophies of the superior power of the divinity who protected the empire*.

The state of property in Peru was no less singular than that of religion, and contributed likewise to give a mild turn to the character of the people. All the lands susceptible of cultivation were divided into three shares, one of which was consecrated to the sun; and whatever it produced was appropriated to the purposes of religion: another belonged to the Inca, being set apart as the provision made by the community for the support of government; and the third and largest share was reserved for the maintenance of the people, among whom it was parcelled out. No individual however had a right of exclusive property in the portion allotted to him: he possessed it only for a year; at the expiration of which a new division of lands was made by regular measure, the shares being proportioned to the rank, the number, and the exigencies of each family. All those lands were cultivated by the joint industry of the community; the people being maintained at the expence of religion and the state, during the time they were employed on the lands of the Sun and the Inca. Summoned by a proper officer, they repaired in a body to the fields, and performed their common task, while songs and musical instruments cheered them to their labour†.

In consequence of this singular distribution of territory, as well as the mode of cultivating it, the ideas of a common interest, and of mutual subserviency were continually inculcated. Every individual felt his connection with those around him, and knew that he depended on their friendly aid for what increase he was to reap; hence resulted gentle manners and mild virtues. But the institutions of the Incas, though framed in such a manner as to strengthen the bonds of affection among their subjects, by no means reduced them to an equality of condition: the distinction of ranks was fully established among the Peruvians‡; and we may venture to affirm, that they would have acquired the ability of diversifying and extending their enjoyments, if their talents had been excited by the introduction of reated, transferable, and hereditary property.

The Peruvians, however, had advanced far beyond the Mexicans, both in the necessary arts of life, and in such as have some title to the name of elegant; Agriculture in particular, that art of primary necessity in social life, was more extensive, and carried on with greater skill in Peru, than in any other part of America. The quantity of soil under cultivation was not left to the discretion

* Garcilasso, lib. v. c. 12. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. vii.
dec. V. lib. x. c. 1. Garcilasso, lib. v. c. 3.

† Herrera,
‡ They were divided into four
order: 1. The Yanacunas, who were held in a state of servitude, and whose garb and houses
were of a form different from those of freemen; 2. Next such of the people as were free but
distinguished by no official or hereditary honours; 3. The Orejones, who formed what may be
denominated the order of nobles, and in peace as well as war, held every office of power and
trust; 4. The Children of the Sun, who by their high descent, and peculiar privileges, were as
much elevated above the Orejones, as these were above the Yanacunas. Herrera, dec. III.
lib. x. c. 1.

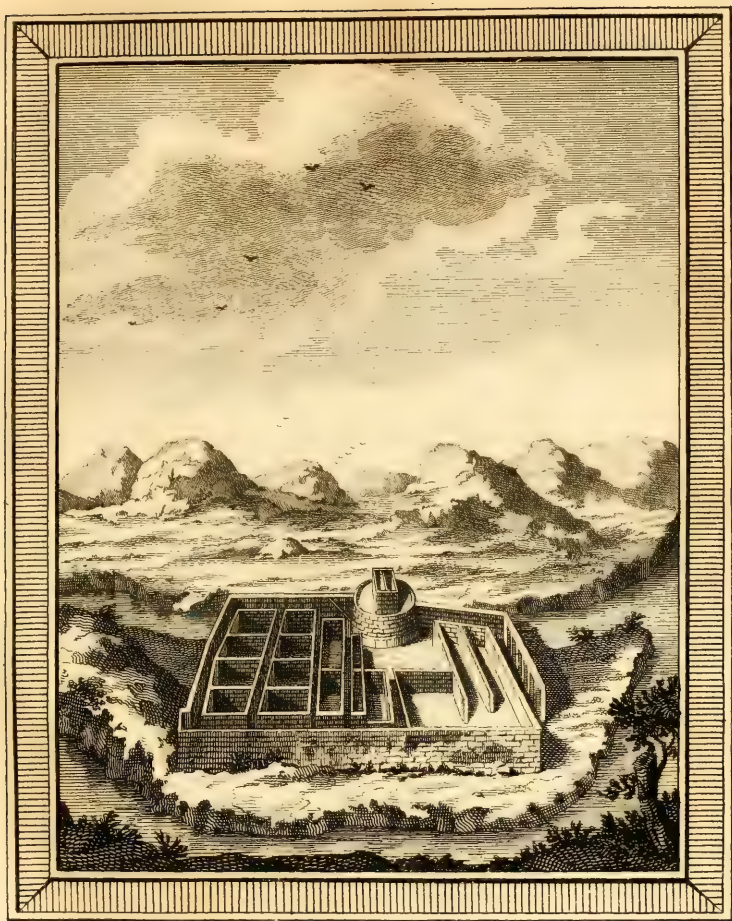
BOOK I.

of individuals, but regulated by public authority in proportion to the exigencies of the community; and the invention and industry of the people were farther called forth to extraordinary exertions by certain defects peculiar to their climate and soil. As the low country in Peru is naturally sandy and barren, never refreshed with rain, and watered only by some streams which rush from the mountains like torrents, the ingenuity of the people had recourse to various expedients in order to fertilize such an unpromising region. By means of artificial canals, conducted with much patience, and no little art, from the streams that intersect their country, they conveyed a regular supply of moisture to their fields; and they enriched the soil by manuring it with the dung of sea fowls, of which they found an inexhaustible store on all the islands scattered along their coasts*.

Nor was the superior industry and ingenuity of the Peruvians less conspicuous in the construction of their public buildings, roads and bridges. It was in the temples consecrated to the Sun, and in the edifices destined for the residence of their monarchs, that they displayed the utmost extent of their progress in architecture. Ruins of these sacred or royal buildings, are found in every province of Peru, some of a moderate size, many of immense extent, but all remarkable for solidity; and though the structures appear to have been low, and the apartments in them ill disposed and worse lighted, they must nevertheless be considered as stupendous efforts of a people unacquainted with the use of iron, and convey to us an exalted idea of the power possessed by the Incas. But the two great roads from Cuzco to Quito, extending in an uninterrupted stretch above five hundred leagues, are entitled to still higher praise, and reflect the utmost honour on the memory of the ancient monarchs of Peru. The one was conducted through the interior and mountainous country, the other through the plains on the sea-coast. At proper distances Tambos or inns were erected for the accommodation of travellers; and though these roads were but slightly formed, and did not exceed fifteen feet in breadth, they must be considered as a striking proof of an advanced state of policy. Another improvement, equally unknown over all the rest of America, was intimately connected with this. As the roads were frequently intersected by torrents, unnavigable by reason of their rapidity, it was necessary to find some expedient for passing them. From their unacquaintance with the use of arches, and their inability to work in wood, the Peruvians could not construct bridges either of stone or timber; but, in order to supply that defect, they formed cables of great strength, by twisting together pliable withs or osiers, six of which they stretched across the stream parallel to one another, and made them fast on each side. These they bound firmly together, by interweaving smaller ropes so close as to form a compact piece of network, which being covered with branches of trees and earth, they passed along with tolerable security. Proper persons were appointed to attend at each bridge, to keep it in repair, and to assist passengers†.

* Acofta, lib. iv. c. 37. Zarate, lib. i. c. 4.
lib. iii. c. 8. Herrera, dec. III. lib. x. c. 1, 2. Ulloa, Voy. vol. I. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. vii.

† Zarate, lib. v. c. 14. Garcilaffo,



*View of the Palace and Citadel which the Inca Kings had
near the Village of Canar, the Walls of which are still remaining.*

The Peruvians had even extended their ingenuity to works of elegance. Among these their polished stone mirrors are highly celebrated; and their dexterity in forming vessels of gold and silver appears even to have been superior to that of the Mexicans. But many other circumstances seem to indicate, that society was less advanced in Peru, notwithstanding so many improvements in arts and policy, than among the subjects of Montezuma. In all the dominions of the Incas, Cuzco was the only place that had the appearance, or was entitled to the name of a city. Every where else the people lived mostly in detached habitations, dispersed over the country; or, at the utmost, settled together in small villages: but till men are brought to assemble in numerous bodies, and incorporated in such close union as to enjoy frequent intercourse, they never imbibe perfectly the spirit, or assume the manners of social life; it is therefore more surprising that the Peruvians, in this state of imperfect union, should have carried refinement so far, than that they pushed it no further. The less closely men associate the more simple are their manners, and the fewer their wants. Men in such a state find no difficulty in ministering to their own necessities: hence none but the artists employed in works of mere curiosity or ornament constituted a separate order of men in Peru, or were trained to their professions by any particular course of education *.

As the separation of professions was less complete in the Peruvian than the Mexican empire, by reason of the want of cities, commercial intercourse was also less perfect. The Mexicans had stated markets in their towns, to which vast crowds resorted, and where every thing was exposed to sale which human ingenuity had produced, or which the necessities and desires of the people were supposed to crave; whereas the inhabitants of Peru, from their singular mode of dividing property, and the manner in which they were settled, had little traffic of any kind, and were utter strangers to those busy scenes which give activity to the spirit of man. But the chief defect in the character of the Peruvians was their want of courage. The most polished people in the New World were, in this respect, the most despicable. The Mexicans defended their liberties and their possessions with obstinate valour; and even the savage tribes, in different parts of the continent, gallantly opposed their naked breasts to the arms of the Spaniards; but the Peruvians, after a feeble struggle, sunk into servitude, and continue in the most abject condition of any people of America.

* Herrera, dec. III. lib. x. c. 1, 2. Acosta, lib. vi. c. 15. Garcilasso, lib. v. c. 9.

T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
A M E R I C A.

B O O K II.

The EUROPEAN SETTLEMENTS in SOUTH AMERICA and the
ISTHMUS of MEXICO.

C H A P. I.

A general View of the Government and Commerce of the Spanish Colonies.

BESIDES Mexico and Peru, which are still the richest countries in America, BOOK II.
Spain possesses other dominions there of immense extent, and no inconsiderable value. But the conquest of those territories affords nothing sufficiently interesting to merit a particular detail. Such circumstances as deserve to be remembered, shall be noticed in describing them as Spanish colonies. In the mean time, it will be proper to exhibit such a view of the political and commercial regulations of Spain in regard to her settlements, as will make the account of the particular countries, and the importance of the whole more perfectly understood.

On surveying the Spanish dominions in America, stretching from the bottom of the gulph of California to the Straits of Magellan on one side, and from Florida to Patagonia on the other, except the two settlements of Brazil and Surinam, belonging to the Portuguese and the Dutch, one is naturally induced to suppose the king of Spain the most opulent and powerful monarch in
the

the universe. How great then is our surprise, to find him occupying the second rank among the sovereigns of Europe!—The unfolding of this political paradox, this singular disproportion between real and apparent riches, between dominion and power, conducts us to speculations equally curious and interesting. It leads us to inquire, by what errors in her political system, or in her mode of conducting commerce, Spain comes to be deprived of those advantages which she might reasonably be expected to derive from her American settlements. This will best appear from a view of her regulations in regard to each.

The fundamental maxim of the Spanish policy with respect to America, is to consider the territories acquired there as vested in the crown, rather than in the state. In consequence of the bull of Alexander VI. to Ferdinand and Isabella, they and their successors were uniformly held to be the sole proprietors of the vast countries, which the arms of their subjects subdued in the New World. From them of course, all grants of land flowed, and to them they finally returned. The people, in the Spanish settlements, are entitled to no privileges independent of the sovereign, or that can serve as a bar against the power of the crown; for although the citizens, in the different towns, are permitted to elect their own magistrates, the jurisdiction of these is merely municipal, and confined to the regulation of their own interior commerce and police. The will of the monarch is a law, in whatever relates to public government or general interest. No political power originates from the people: all centres in the crown, and the officers of its nomination. At the head of these are the viceroys, the mode of whose appointment, and the nature of whose authority is a new source of oppression.

All the Spanish dominions in America were originally divided into two immense governments; one subject to the viceroy of Mexico, the other to the viceroy of Peru. The jurisdiction of the former extended over all the provinces belonging to Spain north of the isthmus of Panama; that of the latter, over all that she possessed in South America. The inconveniencies of this arrangement were early felt, and became intolerable, when the remote provinces of each viceroyalty began to improve in population. So prodigious is the extent of the Spanish dominions in the New World, that several places subject to the jurisdiction of each of the viceroys, were at such an enormous distance from the capitals in which they resided, that neither their attention nor their authority could reach them. Some provinces subject to the viceroy of New Spain, lay about two thousand miles from Mexico. There were countries subject to the viceroy of Peru still farther from Lima. The people in those remote districts could hardly be said to enjoy the benefit of civil government. The oppression and insolence of its inferior officers they often feel: and rather submit to these in silence, than involve themselves in the expence and trouble of resorting to the distant capitals, where alone they can find redress. As a remedy for those evils, a third viceroyalty was established in the beginning of the present century, at Santa Fé de Bogota, the capital of the New Kingdom of Granada, the jurisdiction of which extends over the whole kingdom of Tierra Firma, and the province

of Quito *; and a fourth has been lately erected, to the jurisdiction of which are subjected the provinces of Rio de la Plata, Buenos-Ayres, Paraguay, Tucuman, Potosi, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Charcas, and the towns of Mendoza and St. Juan. The limits of the viceroyalty of New Spain have likewise been circumscribed, and with no less propriety and discernment: four of its remote provinces, Sonora, Cinaloa, California, and New Navarre, have been formed into a separate government; though the person intrusted with this command is not dignified with the title of viceroy, nor does he enjoy the appointments belonging to that rank †.

The viceroys not only represent the person of their sovereign, but possess his royal prerogatives within the precincts of their own governments, in the utmost extent. Like him, they exercise supreme authority in every department of government, civil, military, and criminal. They may preside in every tribunal; and they have the sole right of nominating the persons who hold many offices of the highest importance, as well as the occasional privilege of supplying such as are in the royal gift, until the successor appointed by the king shall arrive. The external pomp of their government is suited to its real dignity and power: their courts are formed upon the model of that of Madrid, with horse and foot guards; a household regularly established; numerous attendants, and ensigns of command; displaying such magnificence, as hardly retains the appearance of delegated authority ‡. Conscious of this, and of the innumerable opportunities which the viceroys have of accumulating wealth, the jealousy of the Spanish government permits them to continue in office only for a few years; a circumstance that often renders them rapacious, and adds to the ingenuity and ardour wherewith they labour to improve every moment of power, which they know is hastening fast to a period. They are succeeded by others, who have the same motives to pursue the same conduct; and being generally chosen out of families of distinction of broken or shattered fortunes, the provinces are exhausted by avarice and oppression, in order to repair the waste of former prodigality, or to furnish the means of future profusion.

As the viceroys, though ever so well disposed, cannot execute the office of a supreme magistrate in every part of their extensive jurisdiction, they are aided in their government by officers and tribunals similar to those in Spain. The administration of justice is vested, as we have already seen, in courts known by the name of Audiences. These are eleven in number, and dispense justice to as many districts, into which the Spanish dominions in America are divided. Both civil and criminal causes come under their cognizance, and for each particular judges are set apart. Their sentences are final in every litigation concerning property of less value than six thousand pesos; but when the subject in dispute exceeds that sum, their decisions are subject to review, and may be carried, by appeal, before the Royal Council of the Indies; in which, as formerly observed, is vested

* Voy. de Ulloa, tom. I.

† Robertson, Hist. Americ. book viii.

‡ Voy. de Ulloa, tom. I.

the supreme government of all the Spanish dominions in America. The Audiences are established at St. Domingo in the island of Hispaniola, Mexico in New Spain, Lima in Peru, Panama in Tierra Firma, Santiago in Guatimala, Guadalajara in New Galicia, Santa Fé in the New Kingdom of Granada, La Plata in the province of Charcas, St. Francisco de Quito, St. Jago de Chili, and Buenos Ayres *. Several large provinces are subject to each of these Audiences, and some so far removed from the cities where the courts are fixed, that they can derive little benefit from their jurisdiction.

The first object of Spain, after establishing her dominion over her American conquests in such a manner as to keep the natives in absolute subjection, and the colonies in perpetual dependance on the parent state, was to secure an exclusive interest in their commerce; and as almost all the countries that she had discovered and occupied lay within the tropics, the productions of which are different from those of Europe, even in its most southern provinces, the most beneficial effects might have been expected from such an intercourse, both to the inhabitants of the Old and New World. In order to prevent the colonies from making any efforts that might interfere with those of the mother country, the establishment of several species of manufactures, and even the culture of the vine and olive, are prohibited in the Spanish settlements, under the severest penalties †. They must trust entirely to Old Spain for most of the objects of primary necessity, and even for their luxuries. In exchange for these is given the produce of their mines and plantations. All that her colonies yield flows into the ports of Spain, and all that they consume must issue from them; for no foreigner can enter one of her settlements without express permission, nor are the vessels of any foreign nation received into their harbours, and the pains of death, with confiscations of moveables, are denounced against every inhabitant who presumes to trade with them ‡. Nor did the jealousy and narrow maxims of the Spanish government stop here. It prohibited, under the most severe penalties, all communication between the various provinces situated on the South Sea; though each of these yields peculiar productions, the reciprocal exchange of which might have added to the happiness of their respective inhabitants, or have facilitated their progress in industry. It cruelly debarred the Spaniards in Peru, in New Spain, in Guatimala, and the New Kingdom of Granada, from such a correspondence with each other, as tended manifestly to their mutual prosperity ||.

Such is the great outline of that system of policy pursued by the Spanish monarchs in regard to their American settlements; a system dictated by ambi-

* Robertson, *Hist. America*, vol. II. note 74.

† Ulloa *Retabliss. des Manufac.*—On account of the distance of Peru and Chili from Spain, and the difficulty of carrying commodities of such bulk as wine and oil across the isthmus of Panama, or round by Cape Horn, the Spaniards in those provinces have been permitted to plant vines and olives; but they are strictly prohibited from exporting wine or oil to Panama, Guatimala, or any province in such a situation as to receive it from Spain. *Recopil. de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indas*, lib. ix. tit. 18.

‡ *Recopil. lib. ix. tit. 17.* Robertson, *Hist. Amer.* b. viii.

§ *Id. ibid.*

tion and avarice, and rendered more oppressive by superstition, as if Heaven had decreed that the same dæmons, which conspired the ruin of the New World, should also inflict vengeance on its destroyers. Never perhaps was despotism any where established with so little regard to the rights of humanity. The natives reduced to a state of servitude; the new inhabitants subjected to the arbitrary will of a succession of hungry and rapacious governors, who, like so many vultures, prey upon their vitals; prohibited from supplying their own necessities, from having recourse to foreigners, or to the neighbouring colonies of their countrymen, and obliged to purchase the articles sent from the parent-state at an exorbitant price!—In order to secure the monopoly at which she aimed, Spain conducted all her trade with America by means of two fleets, which sailed under strong convoys; the one by the name of the Galleons, the other by that of the Flota. They were equipped annually, and originally took their departure from the port of Seville, afterwards from that off Cadiz. In consequence of such a restricted mode of communication, two hundred, and even three hundred per cent. are profits not uncommon in the commerce of Spain with her colonies*.

Population was not likely to make rapid advances in settlements where men had so few inducements to look forward to posterity, nor industry to flourish under so many discouragements. As a further check upon both, religion, which was early established in America in the same form as in Spain, with its full train of archbishops, bishops, deans, and other dignitaries, demanded a tenth out of the produce of the planter. This tax upon industry, which is in no slight degree oppressive to society even in its most improved state, must have been highly grievous to infant colonies, as it affects every article of primary necessity towards which the attention of new settlers are naturally turned. Nor were the demands of the clergy confined to articles of simple culture: its more artificial productions, such as sugar and indigo, were declared tythable†. The industry of the planter was taxed in every stage of its progress; but so fertile and inviting are the regions in America which the Spaniards have occupied, that population gradually increased in spite of every obstruction, and filled her colonies with citizens of various orders. Among these, the Spaniards who arrive from Europe, distinguished by the name of Chapezones, occupy the first rank; and from the jealous attention of the Spanish court to secure the dependence of the colonies, every department of consequence is not only filled by persons sent from Europe, but each must bring proof of a clear descent from a family of *Old Christians*, untainted by any mixture of Jewish or Mahometan blood, and never disgraced by any censure of the inquisition‡. Power is deemed to be safely lodged in such pure hands: almost every function, from the viceroyalty downwards, is committed to them alone; while those, who by their birth or residence in America, may be suspected to have any interest

* Ulloa, Retabliss. part II.

† Recop. lib. i. tit. 16.

‡ Recop.

lib. ix. tit. 26. Robertson, Hist. Amer. book viii.

|| Recop. lib. i.

tit. 16.

adverse

BOOK II. adverse to that of the mother-country, are the object of distrust to such a degree as amounts nearly to an exclusion from all offices of confidence or authority. In consequence of this predilection of the court, the Chapetones are raised to such pre-eminence in Spanish America, that they look down with disdain on every other order of men.

The Creoles, or descendants of Europeans settled in America, form the second class of subjects in the Spanish colonies. Some of them are descended from the conquerors of the New World, others can trace up their lineage to the noblest families in Spain, and many of them are possessed of ample fortunes; but, by the enervating influence of a sultry climate, by the rigour of a jealous government, and by their despair of attaining those distinctions to which mankind naturally aspire, the vigour of their minds is so entirely broken, that great part of them, languid and unenterprising, waste life in luxurious indulgencies, mingled with an illiberal spirit of superstition, still more debasing. Commerce appears to them so cumbersome and oppressive, that, in most parts of Spanish America, they decline engaging in it: the interior traffic of every colony, as well as its trade with the neighbouring provinces, where that is permitted, and with Spain itself, is therefore carried on chiefly by the Chapetones *, who acquire immense wealth by their industry, at the same time that they engross the emoluments of government.

The various passions excited by this distinction of rank and character, between those two orders of citizens, have settled into the most violent and implacable hatred, which often breaks out in occasional ferments, and is marked by appellations as contemptuous as those which flow from the most deep-rooted national antipathy †. From a refinement in distrustful policy, the court of Spain cherishes those seeds of discord, and foment this mutual jealousy; which not only prevents the two most powerful classes of its subjects in the New World from combining against the parent state, but prompts each with the most vigilant zeal, to observe the motions and counteract the schemes of the other ‡.

The third class of inhabitants in the Spanish colonies is a mixed race, the offspring either of an European and a Negro, or of an European and Indian; the former called Mulattoes, the latter, Mestizos. The several stages of descent in their race, and the gradual variations of shade, until the African black, or the copper-colour of America, brighten into an European complexion, are accurately marked by the Spaniards, and each distinguished by a peculiar name. Those of the first generation are now considered and treated as Indians and Negroes; but in the third descent, the characteristic hue of the former disappears; and in the fifth, the deeper tint of the latter is so entirely effaced that they can no longer be distinguished from Europeans, and are entitled to all their privileges §. The mechanic arts are chiefly carried on by this mixed race, whose form is remarkably robust and hardy §.

* Voy. de Ulloa, tom. I.
Amer. book viii.

† Gage's Survey.
‡ Voy. de Ulloa, tom. I.

§ Robertson, Hist.
§ Id. *ibid.*

The Negroes hold the fourth rank among the inhabitants of the Spanish colonies, and in several of their settlements, particularly in New Spain, are employed in domestic service. They form a principal part in the train of luxury, and are cherished and caressed by their superiors, whose manners they imitate, and whose passions they imbibe. Their dress and appearance is hardly less splendid than that of their masters*. Elevated by this distinction, they have assumed such a tone of superiority over the Indians, and treat them with such intolerance and scorn, that the antipathy between the two races has become implacable. Even in Peru, where they are more numerous, and employed in field-work, the Negroes maintain their ascendancy over the natives, and their mutual hatred subsists with equal violence. This aversion, to which accident gave birth, is industriously fomented by the laws; all intercourse which might form a bond of union between the two races being prohibited by the most rigorous injunctions†.

The Indians form the fifth, and most depressed order of men, in that country which belonged to their ancestors. By the famous edict of Charles V. which we have seen give rise to so many disturbances, the Indians were exempted from involuntary services; but so many inconveniencies were experienced in carrying that edict literally into execution, that, after a variety of unsuccessful attempts, the idea was laid aside, and measures were taken to secure the labour of the Indians, though now considered as free men, as well as to make them contribute to the support of government. With this view, an annual tax was imposed upon every male, from the age of eighteen to fifty; and at the same time, the nature as well as the extent of the services which they might be required to perform, were ascertained with precision. The tribute varies in different provinces, but if that paid in New Spain be taken as a medium, its annual amount is nearly four shillings a head‡. The right of levying it likewise varies. Every Indian in Spanish America is either an immediate vassal of the crown, or depends upon some subject to whom the district in which he resides, has been granted for a limited time, under the denomination of *encomienda*. In the former case, about three-fourths of the tax is paid into the royal treasury; in the latter, the same proportion of it belongs to the holder of the grant. According to the same rule, the benefit arising from the service of the Indians accrues either to the crown, or to the person possessed of the *encomienda*. The nature of the work which they must perform is not only defined, but a recompence, seemingly equitable, is allowed for their labour. On many occasions, however, both from the avarice of individuals, and from the exactions of the magistrates, unreasonable tasks are imposed, the term of their labour is prolonged, and they groan under all the insults and wrongs which are the lot of a dependant people||.

The stated services demanded of the Indians may be divided into two branches. They are either employed in works of primary necessity, without which society

* Voy. de Ulloa, tom. I. Gage's Survey.

† Recop. lib. vii. tit. 5.

Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. viii.

‡ Recop. lib. vi. tit. 5.

|| Robertson,

Hist. Amer. b. viii.

cannot exist comfortably, such as the culture of grain, the building of bridges, the forming of high roads; or they are compelled to labour in the mines, from which the Spanish colonies derive their chief value and importance*. The last is the great source of their oppression. Their constitutions are exhausted in extracting ore from the bowels of the earth, and in refining it by successive processes, no less unwholesome than laborious. How often must they curse the richness of their country! which not only tempted the Spaniards to deprive them of their possessions, but to condemn them to a condition more completely wretched than that of any other vanquished race.

These reflections naturally lead us to speak of the American mines, to which the first settlers bent all their attention, and which poured forth their treasures with a profusion that astonished mankind. The quantity of gold and silver that has been regularly entered in the ports of Spain is computed at four millions sterling annually; reckoning from the year 1492, in which America was first discovered, to the present time. In two hundred and eighty-three years, this amounts to eleven hundred and thirty two millions; and, immense as this sum is, the Spanish writers contend, that as much more ought to be added to it, in consideration of the treasure which has been extracted from the mines, without paying duty to the king: consequently, admitting their computation, Spain has drawn from the New World, a supply of wealth amounting at least to two thousand millions of pounds sterling†.

One might naturally suppose that such a torrent of treasure must have rendered Spain the richest country in the universe. But the event has proved otherwise. When the American mines were first opened, and the intercourse between Spain and her colonies became active and considerable, her interior industry and manufactures were in a state so prosperous, that, with the product of these, she was able to answer their growing demands. Before that time, her manufactures in wool, in flax, and in silk, were so extensive as to furnish not only what was sufficient for her own consumption, but to afford a surplus for exportation; and when a market for them formerly unknown, was opened, to which she alone had access, this new employment must have added vivacity to the spirit of industry. Various causes, however, contributed to the decay of that spirit, and prevented the manufactures, the population, and wealth of Spain from increasing in the same proportion with her colonies, or her colonies from attaining that degree of prosperity which might have been expected from the opulence and fertility of the countries where they are settled.

Political writers are much divided on this subject; and an author of real discernment † has justly ridiculed the commonly received opinion, that the Spaniards voluntarily neglected their manufactures and agriculture, in consequence of finding themselves masters of the treasures of America, which industry only could make the property of the people, or of such individuals as did not

* Recop. lib. vi. tit. 13.
Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. viii.

† Uzariuz, Theor. y Pract. de Comercio, c. 3.
Of these mines a particular account shall be given, in treating of the countries in which they are found.
t. Abbé Raynal.

visit the New World. But another author * of no less penetration, and more comprehensive ideas, has taken the matter a little higher. It is with nations, he observes, as with individuals; when wealth flows in gradually, and with moderate increase, it feeds and nourishes that activity which is friendly to commerce, and calls it forth into vigorous and well conducted exertions; but when it pours in suddenly, and with too full a stream, it overturns all sober plans of industry, and brings along with it a taste for what is wild, extravagant, and daring, in business or in action. Accordingly, some symptoms of the pernicious influence of the great and sudden augmentation of revenue, that the possession of America brought into Spain, soon began to appear in the political operations of that monarchy, and rapidly communicated itself to the people. It inspired Charles V. with the idea of overturning the liberties of Germany; and Philip II. whose talents were by no means equal, but whose ambition was not inferior to that of his father, entertained so high an opinion of his own resources, that he thought nothing too arduous for him to undertake. He had formed the scheme, if we may credit contemporary historians, of making himself as absolute in Europe as in America. One thing we know, that he waged open war with the English and Dutch, encouraged and aided a rebellious faction in France, and conquered Portugal, at the same time that he maintained armies and garrisons in Italy, Africa, in the East Indies, and the New World.

By such a multiplicity of great and complicated operations, pursued with ardour during the course of two long reigns, Spain was drained both of men and money; and the few inhabitants that remained, would have thought they prostituted their victorious hands, by applying them to peaceful labours. Under the weak administration of Philip III. the vigour of the nation continued to decrease, and was sunk into the lowest decline, when the inconsiderate bigotry of that monarch expelled at once near a million of his most industrious subjects; expelled them at the very time, when the exhausted state of the kingdom required some extraordinary exertion of political wisdom to augment its numbers and to revive its strength. These were the Morescoes, or descendants of the Moors, who were supposed, from some circumstances, to be infidels in their hearts, though they outwardly professed Christianity.

It is easy to conceive what a vacancy the loss of a million of industrious inhabitants must make in a country at such a crisis; at a time when the nobility, who still retained the prejudices and barbarous privileges of the Visigoths, from whom they boasted their descent, threw all the labour upon that set of men they despised, though in fact the most useful. The military, that destructive profession, in every sense of the word, was the only one that was entitled to any distinction; and the arts of primary necessity, as well as those by which life is rendered more comfortable, stamped a mark of dishonour upon those who professed them. If agriculture was in the least attended to, it was because there were slaves; if Spain had any manufactures, it was owing to the Morescoes, who led a laborious life,

A. D. 1612.

* Dr. Robertson.

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and were generally held in contempt. Administration did not reflect, That, in order to retain the treasures of America in the mother-country, it was necessary to encourage that industry which brought them thither. The only active part of the nation, the only set of men who could promote this great end, were infamously banished; and incredible as it may seem, there was not a kingdom in Europe sufficiently enlightened to afford them an asylum. They were forced to disperse themselves in Africa and Asia.

Spain felt such a diminution in the number of her people, that, from her inability to recruit her armies, she was obliged to contract her operations: her flourishing manufactures were fallen into decay; her fleets, which had been the terror of Europe, were ruined; her extensive foreign commerce was lost; the trade between different parts of her own dominions was interrupted, and the ships which attempted to carry it on were taken and plundered, by enemies whom she once despised. When the Spanish ministry first perceived the want of specie, occasioned by those multiplied misfortunes, they thought it only necessary to impose heavier duties on manufactures and artificers, in order to supply that deficiency; and when they had no more manufactures to oppress, they oppressed the farmer, by taxes as ill judged as they were various and excessive. In consequence of these, and other concurring causes, even agriculture, the first object of industry in every prosperous state, was neglected; and that fertile peninsula, which afforded subsistence to thirteen or fourteen millions of people before the discovery of America, and which had formerly been the granary of Rome and all Italy, was soon overspread with thorns and briars, and scarcely raised what was sufficient for the support of its few remaining inhabitants.

The demands of the colonies continued to increase, in proportion as the present state declined in population and manufactures. Diverted from the paths of sober industry by the profession of arms, which, as already observed, alone was held honourable, or by the oppressions of government, the Spaniards repaired with eagerness to the New World, in hopes of bettering their condition in that land of treasure. Another drain was opened, by this rage of emigration; and the strength of the colonies was augmented by exhausting that of the mother-country. This matter requires some explanation.

In the countries of Europe, where the spirit of industry subsists in full vigour, every person settled in colonies similar in their situation to those of Spain, is supposed to give employment to three or four at home in supplying his wants*; but wherever the mother-country cannot afford this supply, every emigrant may be considered as a citizen lost to the community, as strangers must reap the chief benefit of answering his demands. Thinned of people, and void of industry, Spain was unable to supply the increasing demands of her colonies. She had recourse to her neighbours. The manufactures of the Low-Countries, of England, of France, and of Italy, which her wants called into existence, or animated with new vigour, furnished in abundance whatever she required. In

* Child on Trade and Colonies.

vain did the fundamental law of Ferdinand and Isabella, concerning the exclusion of foreigners from the trade of America oppose this innovation: necessity, more powerful than the statute, defeated its operations, and constrained the Spaniards themselves to concur in eluding it. Relying on the fidelity and honour of the Spanish merchants, who lend their names to cover the deceit, the English, the French, and Dutch, send out their manufactures to America, and receive the exorbitant price for which they are sold there, either in specie, or in the rich commodities of the New World *. That probity, which is the pride and distinction of the nation, has been the security of foreigners in this trade: neither the dread of danger, nor the allurements of profit, ever induced a Spanish factor to betray the person who confided in him †.

Before the middle of the seventeenth century, not above a twentieth part of the commodities exported to America was of Spanish growth or fabric. All the rest was the property of foreign merchants, though entered in the name of Spaniards. The treasure of the New World may be said henceforth not to have belonged to Spain, as it was anticipated, before it reached Europe, as the price of goods purchased from foreigners. This destructive commerce drained off the riches of the nation faster and more completely, than even the ruinous schemes of ambition carried on by its monarchs. Spain was so much astonished and distressed, at beholding her American treasures vanish almost as soon as they appeared, that she had recourse to many wild and ineffectual expedients. The exportation of gold and silver was rendered capital: but this law was eluded, like the former; and Philip IV. unable to supply what was requisite in circulation, endeavoured to raise copper coin to a value in currency nearly equal to that of silver. The lord of the mines of Mexico and Peru was reduced to the necessity of uttering base money.

Such, from the close of the sixteenth century, has been the internal state of Spain, and such her inability to supply the growing wants of her settlements: and the fatal effects of this disproportion between their demands and her capacity of answering them, have been much increased by the mode already explained, in which the Spanish court has endeavoured to regulate the intercourse between the mother-country and the colonies. The trade with America being confined to one part, was of course thrown into a few hands, and almost the whole of it was gradually engrossed by a small number of wealthy houses, formerly in Seville, and now in Cadiz. Nor does this restraint on the American commerce only affect its domestic state, it also limits its foreign operations. A monopolist may acquire more by a confined trade, which yields exorbitant profit, than by an extensive commerce, in which he receives only a moderate return of gain. It is often his interest not to enlarge, but to circumscribe the sphere of his activity; and instead of calling forth more vigorous exertions of commercial industry, it may be the object of his attention to check and set bounds to them. By some such maxim the mercantile policy of Spain seems to have regulated its inter-

* Raynal, liv. viii. Robertson, book viii.

† Zavala.

course with America; for instead of furnishing the colonies with European goods in such quantity as might render both the price and the profit moderate, the merchants of Seville and Cadiz have always supplied them with a sparing hand, that the eagerness of competition amongst the customers, obliged to purchase in a scanty market, might enable their factors to dispose of their cargoes with exorbitant gain*.

Under the feeble monarchs, with whom the reign of the Austrian line in Spain closed, no remedy was applied to the evils under which the national commerce, domestic as well foreign, languished. These evils continued to increase; and Spain, with dominions more extensive, and more opulent than any European state, possessed neither vigour, nor money, nor industry. At length, to use the elegant language of Dr. Robertson, the violence of a great national convulsion roused the slumbering genius of Spain, and the efforts of the two contending parties in the civil war, kindled by the dispute concerning the succession of the crown at the beginning of the present century, called forth in some degree the ancient spirit and vigour of the nation; while the various powers who favoured the pretensions of the Austrian or Bourbon candidate for the throne, France, England and Holland, sent formidable fleets and armies to their support, and remitted immense sums of money to Spain, which were spent in the provinces that became the theatre of war. Part of the American treasure, of which the kingdom had been drained, flowed back thither; and as soon as the Bourbons obtained quiet possession of the throne, they discerned this change in the spirit of the people, and in the state of the nation, and took advantage of it. Accordingly, the first object of Philip V. was to suppress an innovation which had taken place during the war, and which overturned the whole system of the Spanish commerce with America.

The English and Dutch by their superiority in naval power, having acquired such command of the sea as to cut off all communication between Spain and her colonies, the Spanish court, in order to furnish them with those necessaries of life without which they could not subsist, and as the only means of receiving from thence any part of their treasure, departed so far from the usual rigour of its maxims, as to open the trade with Peru to the French. Lewis XIV. granted the privilege of this lucrative commerce to the merchants of St. Malo, who engaged in it with vigour, and carried it on upon principles very different from those of the Spaniards. They supplied Peru with European commodities at a more moderate price, and not in stinted quantity: the goods which they imported were conveyed to every province of Spanish America, in such abundance as had never been seen in any former period; and if this intercourse had been continued, the exportation of European commodities from Spain must have ceased, and the de-

* Robertson, Hist. Amer. book viii. About the middle of the last century, when the exclusive trade to America from Seville was in its most flourishing state, the burden of the two united squadrons of the Galleons and Flota did not exceed twenty-seven thousand five hundred tons; (Campananes Educ. Popul.) a supply by no means adequate to the demands of the populous and extensive colonies, which depended on those fleets for the luxuries, and many of the necessaries of life. The return being chiefly in gold and silver, was easily conveyed.

pendance of the colonies on the mother-country have been at an end. Peremptory orders were therefore issued, prohibiting the admision of foreign vessels into any part of Peru or Chili, while a Spanish squadron was employed to clear the South Sea of intruders, to whatever nation they might belong.

But though Spain obtained relief from one encroachment on her commercial system, on the cessation of the war which was terminated by the treaty of Utrecht, she was exposed to another which she deemed hardly less pernicious. As an inducement with queen Anne to conclude a peace, which France and Spain desired with equal ardour, Philip V. not only conveyed to Great Britain the *Asiento*, or contract for supplying the Spanish colonies with negroes, which had formerly been enjoyed by France, but granted it the more extraordinary privilege of sending annually to the fair of Porto-Bello a ship of five hundred tons, laden with European commodities. In consequence of this contract, which was vested exclusively in the South Sea Company, British factories were established at Carthagena, Panama, Vera Cruz, Buenos-Ayres, and other Spanish settlements; and the company was farther permitted to freight in the ports of the South Sea vessels of four hundred tons burden, in order to convey its negroes to all the coasts of Peru; to equip them as it pleased; to nominate the commanders of them, and to bring back the produce of its sales in gold or silver, without being subject to any duty of import or export*. The veil with which Spain had hitherto covered the state and transactions of her colonies was removed: the agents of a rival nation, residing in the towns of most extensive trade, and of chief resort, had the best opportunities of becoming acquainted with the interior condition of the provinces; of observing their stated and occasional wants, and of knowing what commodities might be imported into them with the greatest advantage. The merchants of Jamaica, and other English colonies that traded to the Spanish main, were accordingly enabled, by means of information so authentic and expeditious, to assort and proportion their cargoes so exactly to the demands of the market, that the contraband commerce was carried on with a facility, and to an extent unknown in any former period†.

This, however, was not the most fatal effect of the *Asiento* to the trade of Spain. The agents of the British South Sea Company, under cover of the importation which they were authorised to make by the ship sent annually to Porto-Bello, poured in their commodities on the Spanish continent, without limitation or restraint. Instead of a vessel of five hundred tons, as stipulated by the treaty, they usually employed one of a thousand tons in burden, exclusive of water and provisions. She was accompanied by three or four smaller vessels, that supplied her wants; and which mooring in some neighbouring creek, furnished her clandestinely with fresh bales of goods, in order to replace such as were sold. Gained by exorbitant presents, the inspectors of the fair, and the officers of the revenue, connived at the fraud‡.

* Anderson, Hist. Com. vol. II.

† Id. *ibid.* Robertson, Hist. Amer. book viii.

‡ *Uti supra.*

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A. D. 1737.

Thus, partly by the operations of the British South Sea Company, and partly by the activity of private interlopers, almost the whole trade of Spanish America was engrossed by foreigners. The immense commerce of the Galeons, formerly the pride of Spain, and the envy of other nations, ruined by this competition, as well as by the various articles that the English poured into the ports whither they carried their Negroes, sunk to nothing; and the Squadron itself, reduced from fifteen thousand to two thousand tons, served hardly any other purpose than to fetch home the royal revenue, arising from the fifth on silver.

A. D. 1739.

A. D. 1748.

It was alike impossible for Spain not to observe those pernicious encroachments, whose effects were so sensibly felt, or tamely to submit to them. Her first attempt to restrain them was, by stationing ships of force, under the name of *Guarda Costas*, upon the coasts of those provinces, to which interlopers most frequently resorted; and as private interest concurred with the duty which they owed to the public, in rendering the officers who commanded them vigilant and active, some check was given to the progress of the contraband trade, though in dominions so extensive, and so accessible by sea, no number of cruisers was sufficient to guard against its inroads in every quarter. But this interruption, however imperfect, of an intercourse that had been carried on with so much facility, that the merchants in the British colonies were accustomed to consider it almost as an allowed branch of commerce, excited murmurs and complaints; which were, in some measure authorised, and rendered more interesting by several unjustifiable acts of violence committed by the Spanish *Guarda Costas*. These precipitated Great Britain into a war with Spain; in consequence of which, the latter obtained a release from the *Asiento*, and was left at full liberty, by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, to regulate the trade with her colonies, without being restrained by any foreign engagements.

Other beneficial regulations had taken place before this era. The formidable encroachments of the English on their American trade, had not only discovered to the Spaniards the vast consumption of European goods in their colonies, and taught them the advantage of accommodating their importations to the occasional demand of the various provinces, but made them sensible of the necessity of devising some mode of communication, different from the ancient one by periodical fleets, which was ill adapted to afford America a regular and timely supply of what it wanted. As the departure of the Galeons and Flota was sometimes retarded by various accidents, and often prevented by the wars which raged in Europe, the scarcity of European goods in the Spanish settlements, after the trade of the South Sea Company was interrupted, frequently became excessive: their price rose to an enormous height: the watchful eye of mercantile attention did not fail to observe this favourable opportunity: an ample supply was poured in by interlopers, in spite of the vigilance of the *Guarda Costas*, from the English, the French, and Dutch islands; and when the Galeons at length arrived, they found the markets so glutted by that illicit commerce, that there was no demand for their valuable cargoes. In order to remedy this evil, Spain permitted a considerable part of her trade with America to be carried on by *register ships*; which being

being fitted out during the intervals between the stated seasons, when the Galeons and Flota sail, by merchants in Seville and Cadiz, set out for those ports where any extraordinary demand is foreseen or expected, after obtaining a licence from the council of the Indies.

The advantages of conducting commerce in this mode were soon perceived: when the American market was furnished with a regular supply of fresh commodities, the interloper could no longer be allured by the same prospect of excessive gain, nor the people in the colonies urged by the same necessity to engage in the hazardous adventure of contraband trade: the number of register-ships increased; and at length, in 1748, the Galeons were finally abolished, after having been employed upwards of two centuries. Since that time, the trade with Chili and Peru has been carried on entirely by single ships, dispatched as occasion requires. These sail round Cape-Horn, and convey directly to the ports of the South Sea, the productions and manufactures of Europe, for which the people settled in those countries, were formerly obliged to repair to Porto-Bello, or Panama. Such an intercourse cannot fail to contribute to the happiness and prosperity of all the Spanish colonies on the South Sea; but as all the register ships destined for that ocean, must take their departure from Cadiz, and are obliged to return thither*, this branch of the American commerce, even in its improved form, still continues subject to the restraints of a species of monopoly, and must feel its pernicious effects.

Since the accession of the reigning monarch, Charles III. several new regulations have taken place, which discover the progress of a spirit in Spain, far elevated above the narrow maxims on which her system concerning the trade and government of her colonies was originally founded. The first of these was the appointing of packet-boats, to be dispatched on the first day of each month, from Corugna to the Havana, or Porto Rico†. Letters are thence conveyed in smaller vessels to Vera Cruz and Porto Bello, and transmitted by post through the kingdoms of Tierra Firme, Granada, Peru, and New Spain. Packet boats sail with no less regularity, once in two months, to Rio de la Plata, for the accommodation of the provinces to the east of the Andes. With this salutary arrangement, which cannot fail of redounding to the political and mercantile interests of the kingdom, a scheme of extending commerce has been immediately connected: each of the packet-boats, which are vessels of considerable burden, is allowed to take in half a loading of such commodities as are the product of Spain, and most in demand in the ports whither they are bound. In return for

A. D. 1764.

* Campomanes.

† While Spain adhered with rigour to her ancient maxims concerning the commerce with America, she was so much afraid of opening any channel, by which an illicit trade might find admission into the colonies, that she almost shut herself out from any intercourse with them, except that which was carried on by her annual fleets. There was no establishment for a regular communication of either public or private intelligence between the mother-country and her American settlements. Hence the operations of the state, and the business of individuals, were retarded, or conducted unskillfully; and Spain often received from foreigners the first information with respect to very interesting events in her own colonies. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. viii.

BOOK II. these, they bring home to Corugna an equal quantity of American productions*.

This first relaxation of those rigid laws which confined the trade with the New World to a single port, was soon followed by one more decisive. In the year 1765, Charles III. laid open the trade to the Windward islands, Cuba, Hispaniola, Porto-Rico, Margarita, and Trinidad, to his subjects in every province of Spain; permitting them to sail from certain ports in each of those specified in the edict, at any season, and with whatever cargo they judge most proper, without any other warrant than a simple clearance from the custom-house of the place whence they take their departure: and in 1774, he published an edict, granting to the provinces situated on the South Sea, the privilege of a free trade with each other†. Still, however, the commercial regulations of Spain with respect to her colonies, are too rigid and systematical; and many pernicious institutions and abuses, deeply incorporated with the system of internal policy that has been long established in the mother-country, must be abolished, before industry and manufactures can recover such extensive activity, as to enable her to reap those advantages, which she has a natural right to expect from her American settlements‡.

C H A P. II.

Account of New Spain and the neighbouring Provinces.

MEXICO, or New Spain, the first valuable acquisition of the Spaniards on the continent of America, still continues their principal settlement, whether we consider the number of its inhabitants, its natural wealth, or its extended traffic. As the greater part of it lies within the torrid zone, it is excessively hot; and on the eastern coast, where the land is low, marshy, and constantly flooded in the rainy seasons; it is likewise extremely unwholesome. That coast is in other respects disagreeable, being generally encumbered with almost impenetrable woods of mangrove-trees, of a bare and forbidding aspect. The inland country presents a more inviting appearance, and the air is of a better temperature. There the tropical fruits grow in great abundance. On the western side, the land is not so low as on the eastern, is much better in quality, and chiefly laid out in plantations. Few countries, in a word, under the canopy of heaven, enjoy more profusely the benefits of nature, and the necessities of life; though, like all the tropical countries, it abounds more

* Ponz, *Viage de España*. Campomanes, *Educ. Popul.* Append. ii.

† Robertson, *Hist. Amer.* Book viii.

‡ The trade between New Spain and the Philippines is purposely here omitted, as it has no connexion with the general policy of Spain in regard to her colonies. It shall be mentioned in speaking of Acapulco, the port from which it is carried on.

in fruits than in grain. Pine-apples, pomgranates, oranges, lemons, citrons, figs, and cocoa-nuts, are here produced in the greatest plenty and perfection.

The viceroyalty of New Spain is divided into three audiences, namely that of Mexico, of Guadalaxara, and of Guatimala; in each of which are comprehended several extensive provinces: but before we proceed to a particular description of these, it will be proper to give an account of such natural productions as are less or more common to all, and which constitute the commerce of this very valuable part of the Spanish empire in America. Of these the most considerable are gold and silver.

The origin of metals has not always been well understood. It was long thought that they were as old as the creation. It is now believed with greater reason, that they are formed successively: in fact, it is impossible to doubt that nature is continually in action, and that she exerts herself with as much power in the bowels of the earth, as on its surface. Every metal, according to the chemists, has for its principle, an earth which constitutes and is peculiar to it. It presents itself sometimes to us in the form which characterises it, and sometimes under various appearances, and then it requires a degree of habit and skill to recognize it. In the first case it is called native, in the second mineralized ore.

Metals, whether native or mineralized, are sometimes scattered by fragments in beds of earth that are horizontal or inclined; but this is not the place of their origin: they have been conveyed thither by volcanoes, floods or earthquakes, which are continually subverting our miserable planet. They are commonly found within the rocks and mountains where they are formed; sometimes in regular veins, sometimes in detached masses: and according to the conjectures of naturalists, from these large caverns, which are perpetually heated, arise continual exhalations. These sulphurous and saline liquors act on the metallic particles, attenuate, divide them, and put them in motion within the cavities of the earth. They again unite; and then becoming too heavy to support themselves in the air, they fall and are heaped up one upon another. If in their several motions they have not met with other bodies, they form pure metals: if otherwise, they are combined with foreign substances.

Nature, which, from some circumstances, seems to have intended to conceal these metals from the avidity of man, has also taken care to generate them in such places as are entirely unfit for pasture or tillage, that the soil proper for yielding any thing necessary to his well-being, might not be torn up in search of what generally turns to his prejudice. They are usually found in mountains, where plants grow with difficulty, and soon fade; where trees are small and crooked; where the moisture of dews, rains, and even of snows, is soon dried up; where sulphureous and mineral exhalations arise; where the waters are impregnated with vitriolic salts, and where the sands contain metallic particles. Though each of these marks, separately considered, be ambiguous, the whole united, are almost an infallible proof of a mine.

Gold is found either in the sand of rivers native, and in small grains, or it is dug out of the earth in the same condition in small bits, almost wholly metallic,

and

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and of a tolerable purity ; or it is found, like the ore of other metals, in an aggregate opaque mass, in a mixture of earth, stone, sulphur, and other substances. In this state it is of all colours ; red, white, blackish, making little or no display of the riches it contains. Sometimes it forms part of the ornaments of some beautiful stones, which are of various lively colours, intermixed with filaments of this metal, quite native. Lapis lazuli is one of these, which has always some small portions of gold : but this gold-streaking is often extremely fallacious, and has betrayed many into ruinous expences ; for in several stones, these fine veins have been no more than marcasite.

It is remarkable that the gold mines, though they contain the richest of all metals, and though neither the labouring of the mine, nor the purifying of the metal, is attended with such an expence as the working and purifying inferior metals, most frequently disappoint the hopes and ruin the fortunes of such as engage in them. This is occasioned by the inequality of the vein. In some instances it is very large, full, and rich ; in others, it decays by a quick gradation, and is frequently lost of a sudden. But, on the other hand, the ends of the veins are often extremely rich. These are called the *purse* of the vein ; and when the miner is so lucky as to discover one of them, his fortune is made.

The gold ore, when dug out of the mine, is usually broke to pieces in a mill, resembling those large ones employed for grinding apples or bark, wherein a mill-stone set on its edge is made to turn in a circular channel of stone. When the ore is thus broke, and the gold somewhat separated from the impure mass, they add to the whole a quantity of quick-silver. Of all other metals quick-silver has the greatest attraction with gold ; which therefore immediately breaks the links that held it to the former earth, and clings close to this congenial metal. A rapid stream of water is then let into the channel ; and this stream, scouring away (through a hole made for the purpose) the light earth, by the briskness of its current, leaves the mass of gold and mercury, precipitated by its weight, at the bottom. This amalgama, or paste, is put into a linen cloth, and squeezed so as to make the quicksilver separate and run out. To complete the separation, it is necessary to fuse the metal, and then all the mercury flies off in fumes*.

Another method of obtaining and purifying gold is also practised in Spanish America. When by sure tokens they know that gold lies in the bed of a rivulet, they turn the current into the inward angles, which time and the stream have formed ; and whilst this runs, they dig and turn up the earth, in order to make it more easily dissolve, and be carried off. After the surface is completely washed away, and when they have come to a sort of stiff earth, which is the receptacle of gold, they turn the stream back into its former channel, and dig up the earth, which they carry to a little basin, somewhat in the form of a smith's bellows. Into this they direct a small but lively stream, to carry off the foreign matter, whilst they facilitate the operation by stirring the mass with an iron hook, which dissolves the earth, and gathers up the stones, which are carefully thrown out,

* Acosta, lib. iv.

that they may not interrupt the passages that carry off the earth. The gold by this means loosened from the gross substances which adhere to it, falls to the bottom, but mixed so intimately with a black heavy sand, that none of the metal can be perceived, unless the grains happen to be uncommonly large. In order to separate it from this sand, it is put into a sort of wooden platter, with a little hollow of about the depth of half an inch at bottom. This platter they fill with water, and turning the mass about briskly with their hands for some time, the sand passes over the edges, and leaves the gold in small grains, pure, and of its genuine colour, in the hollow of the bottom. Thus is gold refined without fire or mercury, merely by washing; the places where this operation is performed, are therefore called *Lavaderos* by the Spaniards.

Silver is the metal next in rank, but first in consequence in the Spanish traffic, as their mines yield a much greater quantity of the latter than of the former. It is found in the earth under various forms, as the ore of all metals indeed is. There are some instances wherein the silver, almost pure, twines itself about a white stone, penetrating into the interstices in the same manner as the roots of trees enter into the rocks, and twist themselves about them. Some ores are of an ash-coloured appearance, others spotted of a red and blue; some of changeable colours; and many all black, affecting somewhat of a pointed regular form like crystals.

The manner of refining silver does not differ essentially from the process which is employed for gold. They are both purified upon the same principle; by clearing away as much of the earth as can be, with water; by uniting or amalgamating the ore with mercury, and afterwards by clearing off the mercury itself by straining and evaporation. But the management of silver is, in this respect, more difficult than that of gold; because silver is more intimately united with the foreign substances with which it is found in the mine, and its attraction with mercury is much weaker: great care is therefore required in the amalgamation, and it is long before they are perfectly mixed. A quantity of sea-salt is likewise added. No silver is obtained by mere washing*.

The mines in the Spanish colonies are not worked at the expence of the crown, or of the public. In order to encourage private adventurers, the person who discovers a new vein is entitled to the property of it. On laying his claim before the governor of the province, a certain extent of land is measured off, and a certain number of Indians allotted him, under the obligation of his opening the mine within a limited time, and of his paying the customary duty to the king for what it shall produce; namely, one fifth out of the silver, and one tenth out of the gold, the gold mines being more precarious. Invited by the facility with which such grants are obtained, and encouraged by some striking examples of success in this line of adventure, not only the sanguine and the bold, but the timid and the diffident enter upon it with astonishing ardour. Every other occupation is deemed insipid and uninteresting; and every bounty of nature is so much de-

* *Ibid.*

spised, in comparison with the precious metals, that the Spaniards settled in America denominate a country *rich*, not from the fertility of its soil, the abundance of its crops, or the luxuriance of its pastures, but on account of the minerals which its mountains contain *.

The principal mines of New Spain are in the provinces of Zacatecas, New Biscay, and Mexico Proper; all in the inland part of the country, where there are no navigable rivers, and where it is impossible for an enemy to penetrate by land. These are supposed to employ forty thousand Indians, under the direction of four thousand Spaniards; and the total produce of the mines of New Spain, according to Villa Segnor, amounts at a medium, to eight millions of pesos in silver annually, and to five thousand nine hundred and twelve marks of gold †.

But though the inhabitants of New Spain, like those in most of the Spanish settlements, have employed themselves chiefly in searching for the precious metals, they have not altogether neglected the cultivation of the earth. Cotton, sugar, cocoa, tobacco, and European corn, have all been raised with considerable advantage. These, however, for want of men and industry, are consumed merely within the country. The vanilla, indigo, and cochineal, only make part of the trade of New Spain with Europe.

The vanilla is a plant which, like ivy, clings to the trees it meets with, embraces them closely, and raises itself by their aid. Its stem is very small in diameter, and not quite round. Though exceedingly pliable, it is pretty hard. Its bark is thin, very close, and of a green colour. It is intersected, like the vine, with knots at the distance of six or seven inches from each other. From these knots issue leaves resembling those of the laurel, but longer, larger, thicker, and more solid. They are of a bright green colour; their upper surface glossy, their under a little pale. The flowers are blackish. A small pod about six inches long, and four broad, wrinkled, flabby, oily, though brittle, may be considered as the fruit of this plant. The inner part of the pod is lined with a pulp that is brownish, aromatic, somewhat acrid, and full of black, oily, and balsamic liquor, in which an infinite number of black, shining, and almost imperceptible seeds float. The season for gathering the pods begins about the latter end of September, and lasts till the end of December. They are dried in the shade; and when dry, and fit for keeping, they are rubbed externally with a little oil of cocoa, or of calba, to prevent them from becoming too dry and brittle ‡.

This is nearly all that is known of the vanilla, which is particularly appropriated to the perfuming of chocolate; a practice which has passed from the Mexicans to the Spaniards, and from them to other nations. That alone is esteemed which grows in the mountains of New Spain. The Indians only are acquainted with the culture of it; and it is pretended that they have kept this source of wealth to themselves, by taking an oath, that they would never reveal to the

* Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. viii.

† Dampier, vol. I. Raynal, lib. vi.

‡ Theat. Mex. vol. I.

Spaniards any thing respecting the planting of the vanilla. It is more probable, however, that they owe this advantage to the character of their conquerors; who, content with the riches they have acquired, and habituated to lead an indolent life, and to indulge themselves in ignorance, equally contemn the curiosities of natural history, and the researches of those who apply to it.

The Spaniards are better acquainted with indigo. This plant, whose root is three or four inches thick, and more than a foot long, has a smell something like parsley. From the root issues a single stem, nearly of the same thickness, about two feet high, straight, hard, and almost woody, covered with a bark slightly split, of a grey ash-colour towards the bottom, green in the middle, reddish at the extremity, and without the appearance of pith in the inside. The leaves, ranged in pairs around the stalk, are of an oval form, smooth, soft to the touch, furrowed above, of a deep green on the under side, and connected by a very short pedicle. From above one third of the stem to the extremity, are ears loaded with very small flowers, from a dozen to fifteen, but destitute of smell. The petal, which is in the midst of each flower, changes into a pod, in which the seeds are inclosed.

Indigo requires a smooth rich soil, well tilled, and not too dry. The seed of it, which as to figure and colour resembles gun-powder, is sowed in little furrows, two or three inches deep, at the distance of a foot from each other, and in as straight a line as possible. Continual attention is required to pluck up the weeds, which would soon choke the plant. Though it may be sown in all seasons, the spring is commonly preferred. Moisture causes it to shoot above the surface in three or four days, and it is ripe in two months. When it begins to flower, it is cut with pruning knives, and cut again at the end of every six weeks, if the weather is a little rainy. It lasts about two years, after which it degenerates. It is then plucked up, and planted afresh.

Indigo is distinguished into two kinds, the true and the bastard. Though the first is sold at a higher price on account of its superiority, it is more generally advantageous to cultivate the latter, because it is heavier. The first will grow in many different soils, the second succeeds best in those which are moist. Both are liable to great accidents. Sometimes the plant becomes dry, and is destroyed by an insect frequently found on it; at other times the leaves, which are the most valuable part of the plant, are devoured in the space of twenty four hours by caterpillars. The last misfortune, which is but too common, has given occasion to the saying, That the planters of indigo go to bed rich, and rise in the morning totally ruined.

This production ought to be gathered in with great precaution, without pressing or shaking it, as the value of the indigo, when manufactured, depends very much upon the fine farina which adheres to the leaves of the plant. When gathered, it is thrown into the steeping-vat, which is a large tub filled with water. Here it undergoes a fermentation, which in twenty-four hours at farthest is completed. A cock is then turned, to let the water into a second vessel, called the mortar or pounding-tub. The steeping-vat is then cleaned

out,

BOOK II. out, that fresh plants may be thrown in; and thus the work is continued without interruption.

The water which has run into the pounding-tub is found impregnated with a very subtle earth, which alone constitutes the dregs, or blue substance, that is the object of this process, and which must be separated from the useless salt of the plant, because that makes the dregs swim on the surface. In order to effect this, the water is forcibly agitated with wooden buckets that are full of holes, and fixed to a long handle. This part of the process requires the greatest attention. If the agitation be discontinued too soon, that part which is used in dying, not being sufficiently separated from the salt, would be lost: if, on the other hand, the dye were to be agitated too long after the complete separation, the parts would be brought together again, and form a new combination; and the salt, reacting on the dregs, would excite a second fermentation, which would alter the dye, spoil its colour, and make what is called *burnt indigo*. These accidents are prevented by a close attention to the least alterations that the dye undergoes, and by the precaution which the workmen take of drawing a little of it from time to time in a clean vessel. When they perceive that the coloured particles collect, by separating from the rest of the liquor, they leave off shaking the buckets, in order to allow time for the blue dregs to precipitate to the bottom of the tub, where they are left to settle, till the water is quite clear. Holes, made in the tub at different heights, are then opened one after another, and this useless water is let out.

The blue dregs remaining at the bottom having acquired the consistence of a thick muddy liquid, cocks are opened which draw it off into the settler. After it is farther cleared of much superfluous water, in this third and last tub, until nothing remains but a thick mud, it is put into bags of coarse linen. These are hung up and left for some time, until the moisture is entirely drained off. In order to finish the drying, this mud is turned out of the bags, and worked upon boards of porous timber, with a wooden spatula: it is frequently exposed to the morning and evening sun, but for a short time only; then it is put into boxes or frames, and exposed again to the sun in the same cautious manner, after which it is fit for sale.

Indigo is used in washing to give a bluish colour to linen, painters employ it in their water-colours, and dyers cannot make fine blue without it. The ancients procured it from the East Indies, and the moderns also before the discovery of America; hence perhaps its name. The cultivation of it has been successfully attempted at different places, in the American islands and continent, and appears to be fixed at Carolina, Hispaniola, and Mexico. That which is known under the name of Guatimala indigo, the province of Mexico in which it is chiefly produced, is of all others the most excellent. New Spain derives considerable advantage from this plant; but it gains still more by the trade of cochineal.

After much dispute concerning the nature of the cochineal, without which neither purple nor scarlet could be dyed, and which is almost peculiar to New Spain, it seems agreed that it is of the animal kind; an insect of the species of the gall-insect, of the size and form of a bug. This insect is found adhering to

various plants; but there is only one that communicates to it the qualities which render it valuable in medicine and manufactures; namely, that which is called *Opuntia* by the botanists. It consists wholly of thick, succulent, oval leaves, joined end to end, and spreading out on the sides in various ramifications. The flower is large, and the fruit in shape resembling a fig. This fruit is full of crimson juice, and to that juice the cochineal insect owes its colour.

When the rainy season comes on, the persons who cultivate this plant, cut off those branches which abound most with such insects as are not yet at their full growth, and preserve them carefully from the weather and all other injuries. These branches, though separated from the parent-stock, preserve their freshness and juices a long time; and this enables the insect not only to live out the rains, but to grow to its full size, and be in readiness to bring forth its young, as soon as the inclemency of the season is over. The cochineals are then placed upon living plants, disposed in little nests of some mossy substance, which contain each twelve or fifteen insects. Three or four days after their exposure to the enlivening influence of the fresh air, they emit their young. These, scarce bigger than a mite, run about with wonderful celerity, and the whole plantation is immediately peopled. But, what is truly singular, this animal, so lively in its infancy, quickly loses all its activity; and attaching itself to the most nutritive and least exposed part of the leaf of its native plant, clings there for life, without ever moving. Nor does it wound the leaf for its sustenance; it only extracts the juice with a proboscis, with which it is furnished by nature for this purpose.

A circumstance no less remarkable than the way of life of this animal, is the nature of the male, who has no appearance of belonging to the same species. Far from being fixed to a spot, he has wings; and, like the butterfly, is continually in motion. The males are also smaller than the females; and though constantly seen among them, and walking over them, they are not suspected by those who take care of the insects to be a creature of the same species. One male is sufficient to impregnate three hundred females. The female cochineal only is gathered for use.

Three crops of cochineal are made every year, which are so many generations of this animal. The last produces only an indifferent cochineal; because it is mixed with detached parcels of the leaves, that have been scraped to take away the new-born insects, which otherwise it would be hardly possible to gather, and because the young cochineals are then mixed with the old, a circumstance which considerably diminishes their value. As soon as the cochineals are gathered, they are plunged in hot water, in baskets, in order to kill them. There are different ways of drying them, on which chiefly depends the goodness of the commodity. The best is, to expose them to the sun for several days, by which means they acquire a red brown colour, which has induced the Spaniards to call the cochineal so dried *venegrada*. The second method is to put them into ovens, made for the purpose, where they assume a greyish colour streaked with veins of purple, which has given this sort the name of *jaspeada*. The last and most imperfect method, is that commonly practised by the Indians, who put the cochineals on plates along

BOOK II. with their cakes of maize; in which process they are commonly burnt, and therefore are called *negra*.

Though the cochineal belongs to the animal kingdom, and to the species of all others the most likely to perish, yet it never spoils. Without any other care than merely that of keeping it in a box, it has been preserved in all its virtue for a century. It is used in medicine as a cordial and sudorific, in which intentions few things answer better. This, added to its importance in dying, insures it such an high price and quick sale, as should have excited the emulation of those nations that cultivate the American islands, and of other people that inhabit regions whose temperature would be propitious to this insect, and to the plant on which it feeds. New Spain, however, has the sole possession of this rich commodity; and independent of what it furnishes Asia with, sends annually to Europe about two thousand five hundred bags or sacks, which are sold at Cadiz, on an average, for an hundred and forty-five pounds sterling each*.

That very considerable produce hardly costs the Spaniards any trouble. It should seem as if nature had freely bestowed upon their indolence what other nations are obliged to purchase with the price of labour and attention. This reflection is farther justified by another article of their commerce. The domestic animals of Europe, particularly horned cattle, have multiplied in the New World with a rapidity that almost exceeds belief. A few years after the Spaniards settled there, the herds of tame cattle became so numerous, that their proprietors reckoned them by thousands†. As they continued to increase, they were suffered to run wild, and spreading over a country of boundless extent, under a mild climate, and covered with rich pasturage, their number became immense. They range over the vast plains which extend from Buenos-Ayres, towards the Andes, in herds of thirty or forty thousand. They are hardly less numerous in New Spain, where they are killed merely for the sake of their hides; and the slaughter at certain seasons is so great, that the stench of the carcases, which are left in the fields, would affect the air, if large packs of wild dogs, and vast flocks of *gallinazos*, or American vultures, the most voracious of all the feathered kind, did not instantly devour them. The number of those hides exported in every fleet to Europe is prodigious, and forms a lucrative branch of trade‡.

These are the chief productions of New Spain that are of any importance as articles of foreign commerce; and such only are entitled to a particular description in this work. The country and its inhabitants now claim our attention.

The viceroyalty of New Spain originally comprehended all the provinces from Terra Firma to the extremity of New Mexico; but some of the most northern of these, as already observed, have been lately formed into a separate government: Perspicuity, however, makes it necessary to describe them here, as they are too inconsiderable to form a separate article. Then we shall advance by a regular progress towards the south.

* Voyages du Pere Labat, tom. IV. c. 4. Raynal, liv. vi. Europ. Set. in America, par II. c. 4.
 † Hachluyt, vol. III.
 ‡ Acosta, lib. iii. c. 33. Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. viii.

The countries of Cinaloa and Sonora, that stretch along the east side of the Vermilion Sea, or Gulf of California, as well as the immense kingdoms of New Navarre and New Mexico, which bend towards the north, are reduced less or more completely under the Spanish yoke. They extend through the most delightful part of the temperate zone; their soil is in general remarkably fertile, and all their productions, whether animal or vegetable, are most perfect in their kinds. They have all a communication either with the Pacific Ocean, or with the Gulf of Mexico, and are watered by such rivers as not only enrich them, but may become subservient to commerce. The number of Spaniards, however, settled in those vast countries, is so extremely small, that they may be said to have subdued, rather than to have occupied them. But one circumstance may contribute to the speedy population of some districts. Rich mines of gold and silver have been lately discovered in many places; particularly one of gold at Cineguilla in the province of Sonora, where above two thousand persons are settled, under the government of proper magistrates. In order to supply those with the necessaries of life, cultivation must be increased, artisans of various kinds must assemble, and industry as well as population be gradually diffused. It is therefore probable, that these neglected and thinly inhabited provinces, may soon become as populous and valuable as any part of the Spanish empire in America; especially as several other mines, scarcely inferior in riches to that of Cineguilla, have been discovered both in Sonora and Cinaloa*.

The peninsula of California, on the other side the Vermilion Sea, was long supposed to be an island. It is now discovered to be a neck of land which proceeds from the northern coasts of America, and runs, between east and south, as far as the torrid zone. The part of this peninsula that is known, is about nine hundred miles long, and from two hundred to fifty miles broad. Throughout such an extent of country, the nature of the soil, and the temperature of the air must be very different. So in fact we find them. In some places the air is extremely hot and dry, and the ground bare, stoney, mountainous, sandy, without water in sufficient quantity to render it fit either for pasture or tillage; in others, the lands are level and fruitful, interspersed with delightful woods, cool refreshing springs and rivulets, and the most enchanting lawns and meadows. The sea, which is richer than the land, swarms with most excellent fish of every kind: but what renders the gulph of California of still more importance is the pearl-fishery, which attracts, during the proper season, the inhabitants of all the provinces of New Spain.

The Californians are well made, and very strong; but pusillanimous, inconstant, indolent, stupid, and even insensible. They are more swarthy than the Mexicans. Before the Spaniards penetrated into California, the natives had no distinct form either of religion or government. Each nation was an assemblage of several cottages, more or less numerous, that were mutually confederated by alliances, but without any chief. They were strangers even to filial obedience. No kind of dress was in use among the men; but the women (a circumstance

* Robertson, Hist. Americ. book viii.

BOOK II. singular in such a state of society) covered with extreme care those parts which nature intended should be concealed *.

California, as already observed, was discovered by the great Cortez in 1536. He had not leisure to survey it, being obliged to return to his government, where a rumour of his death had disposed the people to a general insurrection. Several unsuccessful attempts were afterwards made to form settlements there; and Spain, discouraged by her losses and expences, had entirely given up the project, when the Jesuits, in 1697, solicited permission to undertake it. As soon as they had obtained the consent of government, they began to execute a plan of legislation; which they had formed from accurate ideas of the nature of the soil, the character of the inhabitants, and the influence of the climate. Their proceedings were not directed by fanaticism. They arrived among the savages whom they intended to civilize with curiosities that might amuse them; with corn for their food, and apparel, which could not fail to be acceptable. The hatred that the Californians bore to the Spanish name was overcome; and they testified their gratitude for these demonstrations of benevolence as strongly as their indolence and insensibility would permit them. These defects in their character were partly overcome by their pious legislators, who pursued their plan with a degree of ardour and resolution peculiar to their society. They applied themselves to the different functions of the carpenter, the weaver, the mason, the husbandman; and by these means succeeded in imparting knowledge, and in some measure a taste for the more useful arts to this rude people, who have been all successively formed into one body.

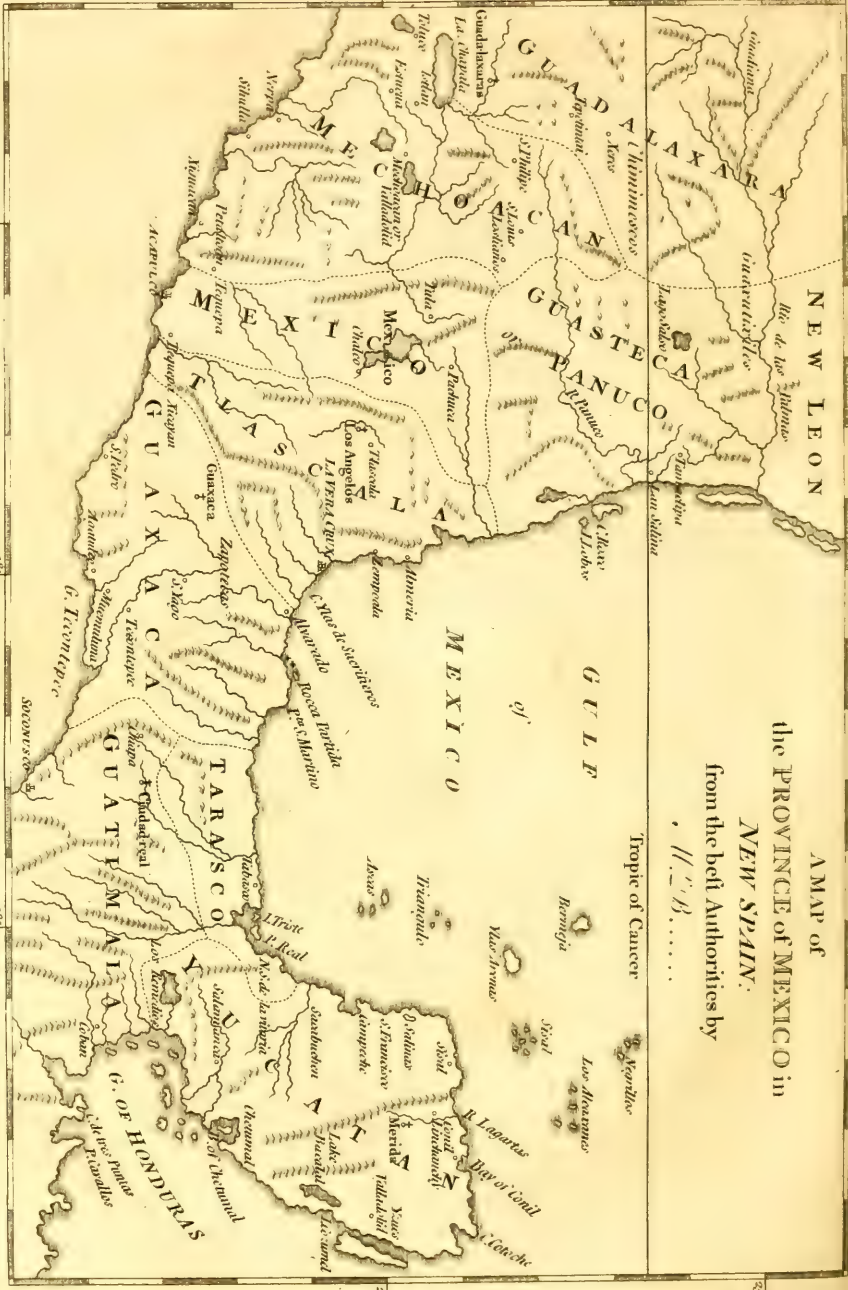
In 1745, the Californians composed forty-three villages. The inhabitants of these subsist chiefly on corn and pulse, which they cultivate, and on the fruits and domestic animals of Europe, the raising and breeding of which are objects of constant attention. They have each a field, and the property of what they reap; but such is their want of foresight, that they would squander in a day the labour of a year, if the missionary or magistrate, did not every where take upon him the care of their produce, and distribute it to them as they stand in need of it. They already manufacture some coarse stuffs, and purchase what necessaries they stand in need of with pearls, which they fish for in the gulph, and with wine nearly resembling that of Madeira, which they sell to the Spaniards.

A few laws, and those very simple, are sufficient to regulate this rising state. In order to enforce the observance of them, the most intelligent person of the village is empowered to whip and imprison offenders. These are the only punishments of which they have any knowledge, and are found to be sufficient to regulate their moral conduct. In all California there are only two garrisons, each consisting of thirty men, and a soldier with each missionary or magistrate. These troops were chosen by the legislators, and are under their command, though paid by the government. From its vicinity to Cinaloa and Sonora, it is probable, should the population of these provinces increase in the manner supposed, that

* Vanegas, Hist. Californ.



MAP of
the PROVINCE of MEXICO in
NEW SPAIN:
from the best Authorities by
J. B.



California may, by degrees, receive from them such a recruit of inhabitants, as to be no longer reckoned among the uncultivated districts of the Spanish empire in America. At present it serves only for a place of refreshment for the annual ships that sail from the Philippine islands to New Spain.

Guadalaxara, the most northern division of New Spain, was subdued in 1531, by Nugnez de Guzman, who found it inhabited by a bold warlike people; well armed, well clothed; obstinate lovers of freedom; and who, for a time, resisted the superior arms and discipline of the Spaniards. The first province, which gives it name to the audience, and takes its own from the capital, is represented as a fertile, healthful country, and contains some mines of silver. The city of Guadalaxara is pleasantly situated on the banks of the river Barenja, which afterwards falls into the South Sea. It is the seat of the royal courts of judicature, and the see of a bishop. Forty leagues north of this city, stands that of Zacatecas, the capital of the province of the same name. It consists of about six hundred houses, and is defended by a considerable Spanish garrison, in order to protect the produce of the silver mines, for which the province is so much celebrated, and which is lodged in this city. The mines of Zacatecas lie chiefly in the western parts, which are otherwise barren; the eastern, are remarkable for their fertility. The province of New Biscay is the next in situation. It contains several rich mines, and abounds in corn, cattle, and other conveniencies of life. The last province worthy of notice in this audience is Nalisco, situated partly on the South Sea. Its capital, named New Compostella, is an opulent town, and was formerly the see of a bishop.—This is all that we know with certainty of the audience of Guadalaxara, which the jealousy of the Spaniards studiously conceals from foreigners, on account of the rich mines with which it abounds, and the small force it has to defend them.

The audience of Mexico is better known, and of yet more importance. Its two most northern districts are Mechoacan and Panuco; the first extending towards the South Sea, the second lying along the Gulph of Mexico. Panuco still feels the destructive rage of the conquerors, who cut off almost to a man its ancient inhabitants: it is so thinly peopled as scarce to deserve the name of a settlement. Mechoacan, as we have already seen, was saved from the sword of the Spaniards by a timely submission. Though an independent kingdom, which had never acknowledged the dominion of Montezuma or his predecessors, its sovereign, astonished at the success of Cortez, did voluntary homage to the king of Spain, immediately after the reduction of Mexico. The soil of Mechoacan is remarkably fertile, and the climate so healthful, that the Spaniards imagine it possessed of some peculiarly restorative quality, on which account the sick and infirm flock to it from all quarters. Here are the most beautiful corn-fields, the richest pastures, the most numerous flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, and the finest breed of horses of any in New Spain, with great abundance of fish, fowl, and game. But the commodities for which the province is more particularly celebrated are sulphur, indigo, sassaaparilla, sassafras, cocoa, the vanilla, ambergris, hides, wool, cotton, silks, sugar, the root Mechoacan, sometimes called white

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rhubarb, and silver. The natives are remarkably ingenious in forming that kind of feather-work so much admired by the ancient Mexicans; their language is the most polished of any province in New Spain; and they are distinguished by the elegance of their form, as well as by their spirit and address. In this province are several rich and well built towns, among which may be numbered Sacatula, Colima, St. Michael, and St. Philip, all advantageously situated in the country, besides two good ports, named St. Anthony and St. Jago. The capital, which formerly bore the name of Mechoacan, but to which the Spaniards have given the name of Valladolid, is a large and beautiful city, adorned with a fine cathedral, and full of handsome houses, the dwellings of rich Spanish merchants, who are proprietors of the mines of Quanaxoato*.

We now come to the province of Mexico Proper, the finest country in the Spanish dominions north of the equator, and incontestably the richest in New Spain. It is reported to exceed all the provinces of either America in extensive and beautiful vallies, rich arable lands, and exuberant and delicious pasturage. Fruits are here produced in the greatest variety, perfection, and abundance; herds and flocks are numerous; and the great lakes, rivers, and the vicinity of the sea, afford fish of every kind. Hence the necessaries of life are extremely cheap, notwithstanding the pompous luxury of the Mexicans, and the profusion in which they possess the precious metals. The silver mines here are richer than those of any other province in the viceroyalty, and their value is augmented by their containing a considerable portion of gold.

Mexico, the capital of this province, and of all New Spain, as it formerly was of the Mexican empire, is still the most magnificent city in the New World. Though no sea port, and destitute of communication with the sea by means of any navigable river, it has a prodigious commerce, and is itself the centre of all that is carried on between America and Europe, on one hand, and between America and the East-Indies on the other. Here many of the principal merchants reside, and here the greatest part of the business is negociated. The goods sent from Acapulco to Vera Cruz, or from Vera Cruz to Acapulco, for the use of the Philippines, and also those for the use of Peru and Chili, all pass through this city, and employ an incredible number of horses and mules in the carriage. Here the viceroy resides, and the first court of audience is fixed, and hither all the gold and silver comes to be coined; here the king's fifth is deposited; and here is wrought all that immense quantity of utensils and ornaments in plate, which is every year sent to Europe. Every thing, in a word, has the greatest air of wealth and splendour: the shops glitter upon all sides with the exposure of gold, silver, and jewels; and their real riches are heightened by the exaggerated representations which imagination forms of the treasures which fill great chests piled up to the ceilings, whilst they wait the arrival of the Flota.

Mexico is situated, as formerly, on the great lake of the same name; but not, as generally supposed, in the middle of the waters. It is founded upon a marsh,

* Voyages de Gemelli Carreri, tom. VI.

adjoining to the lake, and intersected by a multitude of canals *. These serve at once to drain off the moisture, and for the conveniency of intercourse; but after all the soil is so unfirm, that the houses, though supported on piles, often sink four or five feet in a few years. The streets of Mexico are broad, perfectly strait, and almost all intersect each other at right angles. The houses in general are pretty well built, but display few of the elegancies of architecture. The viceroy's palace and the mint, however, are noble edifices. But the most sumptuous buildings are the churches, chapels, and convents, many of which are richly ornamented, both within and without. Their number is altogether incredible. The outside of the cathedral, a stately structure, is unfinished, and likely to continue so, as they are afraid of increasing the weight of the building, which already begins to sink. Its inside is profusely rich. The pillars of polished marble, are hung with the finest crimson velvet, adorned with a broad gold fringe; the rail round the high altar is of solid silver; and what is still more costly, from the roof is suspended a silver lamp, so capacious that three men get in to clean it. This lamp is enriched with figures of lions heads, as big as the life, and other ornaments of pure gold †.

Besides the market-place, named Tlatelulco before the conquest, and which is still of immense extent, Mexico contains three squares, which contribute not a little towards its grandeur. The first is the *major*, or great square, fronting the palace, and in the center of the city; the second, where the bull-fights are held, is called *del Volador*; and the third, is that of *Santo Domingo*. These squares are all tolerably regular and well built, and each has a fountain in the middle. To the north of the town, near the suburbs, is the public walk or *Alameda*. A rivulet runs round it, and forms a considerable circle, with a basin and *jet d'eau* in the middle. Eight walks, with each two rows of trees, terminate at this basin, like a star ‡. The Alameda towards the evening affords a most brilliant spectacle. Thither the Mexicans resort in crowds, as to a place of public amusement. The rivulet or canal is filled with pleasure boats, which entertain the company with music both vocal and instrumental; the principal citizens ride round the circle in their carriages, while the walks are occupied by those of inferior condition. The carriages of the men are followed by a great number of black boys, all covered with lace and embroidery; and the ladies are attended by a train of Indian or mulatto girls, generally clothed in silk, and adorned with jewels ||. Opposite to the Alameda (what a contrast!) is the *Quemadero*, or place where the Jews, and other miserable victims of the awful tribunal of inquisition, are delivered to punishment. It is an inclosure between four walls, filled with ovens, into which are thrown, over the walls, the unhappy persons condemned to be burnt alive §. Historians differ about the number of inhabitants in Mexico: some make them two hundred thousand,

* Lionnel Waffer. Gemelli Carreri. Chappe D'Auteroche. This marsh formerly made part of the lake, (Gage's Survey) and many thousands of Indians were employed for a course of years in draining off the waters.

† Voyage de M. Chappe D'Auteroche.

‡ Ibid.

|| Gage's Survey.

§ D'Auteroche.

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others only one-fourth of that calculation. We shall not perhaps err widely if we fix them at eighty thousand, including Spaniards, Indians, Negroes, Mestizos and Mulattoes of every species. These form such a diversity of heterogeneous races, from the white to the black, that, among an hundred faces, it is difficult to find two of the same colour.

In the province of Mexico Proper are several considerable towns besides the capital, but none that merits a particular description, except Acapulco, the principal port of New Spain on the South Sea. The town itself, though pretty large, is ill built, and thinly inhabited, by reason of the unwholesomeness of the climate, which induces the merchants to reside chiefly in the country: but the harbour is excellent, being equally extensive, safe, and commodious. Its entrance is defended by a lofty castle, mounting forty-two pieces of cannon, but containing only a garrison of sixty men *. Such is the place whose lucrative trade has excited the envy of every commercial nation, and which has been commonly supposed to be a city of great splendour and opulence. Let us inquire into the nature and origin of that trade, to which alone Acapulco owes its importance, and Mexico many of its luxuries.

Philip II. soon after his accession to the throne, formed the scheme of planting a colony in the Philippine islands, which had been neglected from the time of their discovery by Magellan, of which an account has already been given. This he accomplished, by means of an armament fitted out from New Spain †. Manila, in the island of Luconia, was the station chosen for the capital of the new establishment; and, in order to induce the Spaniards to settle there, the rising colony was authorised to send to America India goods, in exchange for the precious metals. From Manila, an active commercial intercourse began with the Chinese, and a considerable number of that industrious people, allured by the prospect of gain, settled in the Philippines under the Spanish protection. By their means the colony was so amply supplied with all the valuable productions and manufactures of the East, as soon enabled it to open an advantageous trade with America, by a course of navigation the longest from land to land on our globe. This trade was originally carried on with Callao, on the coast of Peru; but experience having discovered many difficulties in that mode of communication, and the superior facility of an intercourse with New Spain, the staple of the commerce between America and Asia was removed from Callao to Acapulco.

Many remonstrances have been presented against this trade, as detrimental to Spain, by diverting into another channel a large portion of that treasure which ought to flow into the kingdom; as tending to give rise to a spirit of independence in the colonies, and to encourage innumerable frauds, against which it is impossible to guard, in transactions so far removed from the inspection of government. But as it requires no slight effort of political wisdom and vigour to abolish any practice which numbers are interested in supporting, and to which time has

* Gemelli Carreri, tom. VI. chap. 22.

† Torquem. lib. v. c. 14.

added the sanction of its authority, even though supported by no legal permission, the commerce between Acapulco and Manila is still carried on to considerable extent, and allowed under certain regulations. These regulations are not generally understood. One or two ships depart annually from Acapulco, which may carry out silver to the amount of five hundred thousand pesos *, and an unlimited quantity of European goods and American productions. In return for these they bring back spices, drugs, china and japan wares, calicoes, chintz, muslins, silks, and every precious article, with which the benignity of the climate, or the ingenuity of its people, have enabled the East to supply the rest of the world. The Peruvians, for a time, were admitted to a share in this traffic, and might send annually a ship to Acapulco, to wait the arrival of the vessels from Manila, and receive a proportional share of the commodities which they imported, but as this was found to hurt the trade of European manufactures in South America, the Peruvians were at length excluded by most rigorous edicts, and all the commodities from the East, reserved solely for the consumption of New Spain †.

The elegance and splendor conspicuous in that part of the Spanish dominions is the consequence of this indulgence. The manufactures of the East are not only more suited to a warm climate, and more showy than those of Europe, but can be sold at a lower price; at the same time that the profits upon them are so considerable, as to enrich all those engaged in the trade. It is equally the interest of the buyer and the seller to favour this branch of commerce: it has therefore continued to extend, in spite of regulations concerted with the most anxious jealousy to circumscribe it. Under colour of what the law permits, great sums of silver are exported ‡, and vast quantities of India goods are annually poured into the port of Acapulco. Then the town entirely changes its appearance, and becomes one of the most considerable marts in America. On the arrival of the ships from Manila, a great fair is held, to which all the traders of New Spain resort; but when that, which lasts about a month, is over, Acapulco sinks into its former solitude and insignificance ||.

The other provinces in the audience of Mexico are Tlascala, Guaxaca, Tabasco, and Yucatan. In the first of these stands Vera Cruz, the principal port of New Spain on the Gulph of Mexico. At this port the annual fleet from Cadiz, called the Flota, arrives about the end of November. It generally consists of fifteen or sixteen large merchant ships, from five hundred to two thousand tons burden, under the escort of two or three men of war. The cargo comprehends almost every sort of goods that Europe produces for exportation: wines, brandies, oils, constitute the more bulky part; and gold and silver

* Recop. lib. ix. tit. 45.

† But since a general communication is now opened between the colonies on the South Sea, it will be impossible to prevent Peru from receiving a supply of these contraband commodities.

‡ The ship from Acapulco, taken by Commodore Anson, instead of the 500,000 pesos permitted by law, had on board 1,313,840 pesos, besides uncoined silver equal in value to 43,611 pesos more. Anson's Voyage.

|| Gemelli Careri.

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fluffs, gold and silver lace, cloths, linens, silks, laces, hats, jewels, glaſs, cutlery, clocks, watches, are the articles which are moſt valuable. On the arrival of the Flota a fair is held, which uſually continues about ſix weeks, but is ſometimes prolonged at the ſolicitation of the merchants of the country or thoſe of Spain. When all the goods are landed and ſold, the gold, ſilver, cochineal, indigo, vanilla, hides, and ſome other goods of inconfiderable value, which New Spain furniſhes, are put on board the fleet. It then directs its courſe for the Havanna; where being joined by ſome register ſhips diſpatched to different ports, it returns to Cadiz by the channel of Bahama.

Vera Cruz, like Acapulco, though the ſcene of ſuch prodigious commerce, is in itſelf but an inconfiderable place. It is ſituated on the ſouthern coaſt of Mexico, eighteen miles lower than the town of the ſame name originally built by Cortez, now called Villa Rica, which was abandoned on account of its unhealthineſs, and the inconveniencies of its harbour. The preſent town has little to boaſt on the article of health. It is bounded on the north by dry ſands, and on the weſt by infectious moraffes. Its ſtreets are tolerably ſtraight, and of a conſiderable breadth, but the houſes are generally low, and built of wood. It is fortified with a wall, eight towers erected at different diſtances, and two baſtions which command the ſhore. Theſe works, weak in themſelves and ill-conſtructed, are in an extremely ruinous ſtate; ſo that Vera Cruz depends chiefly for its defence on the caſtle of St. Juan de Ulloa, which is built on a rock that riſes in the middle of the harbour, and faces the town. The royal treaſure was formerly ſent here from Mexico to wait the arrival of the Flota; but ſince the year 1683, when the place was ſurpriſed by the Buccaneers, it has been kept at Los Angeles, the capital of the province, where the principal merchants alſo reſide*.

Puebla de los Angeles, or the city of Angels, vies in magnificence with Mexico itſelf. It is delightfully ſituated on the river Zacatula, in the middle of a fine valley. The houſes are all built of ſtone, and of a good ſize. The market-place is a ſpacious ſquare, from which the four principal ſtreets run in direct lines, and are croſſed by others at right angles. One ſide of this ſquare is almoſt entirely occupied with the magnificent front of the cathedral; the other three conſiſt of piazzas, under which are the ſhops of traders. One may form ſome judgment of the wealth of this city by the revenues of the cathedral, which exceed one hundred thouſand peſos annually. Its territory, which is nearly that of Old Tlaſcala, abounds in grain, ſugar-canes, and every thing that the wiſh of man can deſire. But the chief wealth of the inhabitants ariſes neither from the fertility of their country, nor their vicinity to Vera Cruz, but from their own ingenious manufactures. Their woollen cloths are ſcarcely leſs eſteemed than thoſe of England; their hats are excellent; and their glaſs-work, which is the only one in New Spain, is in a flouriſhing condition. The

* Gemelli Carreri. Gage D'auteroche.

cutlery of Los Angeles also is celebrated, as well as the ingenuity of its artificers, CHAP. II.
in working up gold and silver *.

The provinces of Guaxca and Tabasco deserve no particular notice. Both are thinly inhabited, and the last is remarkably barren. Yucatan, though not more populous or fertile, is more entitled to attention. This peninsula, which lies between the bays of Campeachy and Honduras, both formed by its projection into the sea, is crossed diagonally by a chain of mountains, that decreases as they approach Cape Cotoche. All that part to the west of this chain is dry, and destitute of either river or brook; but the water is every where so near the surface, and sea-shells are found in such numbers, that it is evident this immense space formerly made part of the ocean. When the Spaniards first settled in the Mexican empire, they despised this province, as it did not abound in the precious metals, and discovered few traces of culture. They afterwards, however, discovered, that it produced in greater abundance than any other part of America the logwood tree; which, in dying some colours, is so far preferable to every other material, that the consumption of it in Europe is considerable, and it has become an article of commerce of great value. This tree, if less thick, would not be unlike the white thorn. Its leaves are small, and of a pale green colour. The inner part of the tree, which is at first red, becomes black, after it has been felled some time; and it is only this inner part that gives the black and the violet colour †.

On this discovery the Spaniards built the town of Campeachy on the western coast of Yucatan, which has been indebted solely to the logwood-trade for the advantage of being a very considerable mart. It received every year several vessels loaded with European commodities, whose cargoes were distributed in the inland countries, and which took in return wood, and metals, which the staple of the province drew thither. This traffic continued to increase, till the time that the English conquered Jamaica. The vast number of Buccaneers who then resorted to that island went to cruise in the bay of Campeachy, in order to interrupt the vessels which sailed thither. These plunderers are said to have been so little acquainted with the value of the wood, which was the only commodity of the country, that, when they found barques laden with it, they took away nothing but the iron utensils. One of them, however, having carried off a large vessel, which had nothing else but logwood on board, carried it into the Thames, with no other view than to equip it as a privateer; when, contrary to his expectation, he sold at a very high price the wood which he had thought of so little value that he had always burnt it during his voyage. After this discovery, the Buccaneers who were not successful at sea, never failed to repair to the river Champeton, where they took on board the piles of wood, which were always found ranged on the shore ‡.

A stop being put to the depredations of the Buccaneers, in consequence of a peace between England and Spain, several of them employed themselves in cur-

* Gemelli Carreri.
Raynal, lib. vi.

† Raynal.

‡ Oxmelen, Hist. Freeboot.

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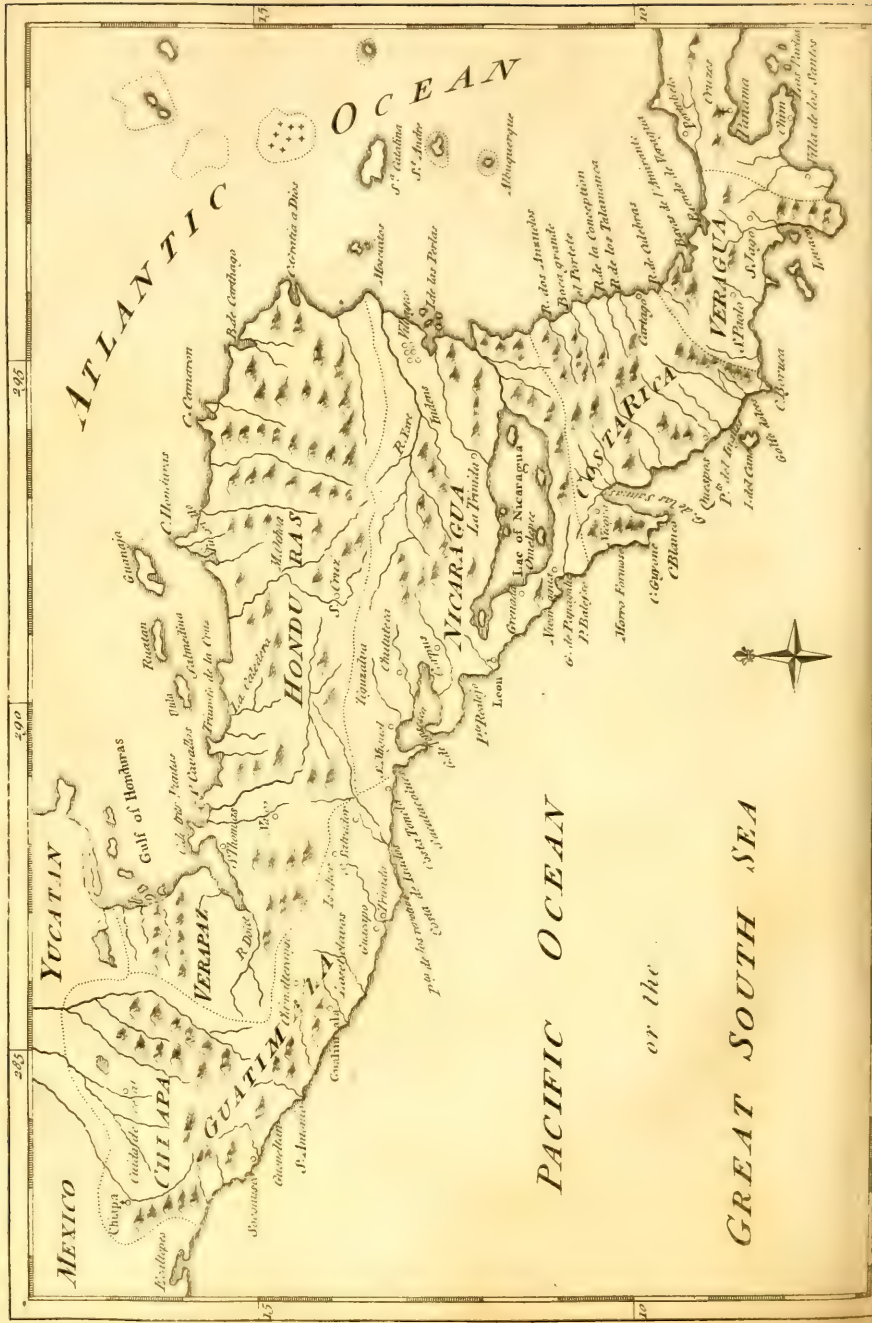
ting logwood. Cape Catoche at first furnished them with abundance; and they there, for a time, carried on a gainful traffic. When most of the trees near the coast were felled, they removed to the island of Trist, in the Bay of Campeachy, where they were no less successful. But their ardour, which at first was extreme, at length gave way to a habit of idleness; and as the greatest part of them were excellent marksmen, the chase became their predominant passion. By this exercise their former inclination to plunder was rekindled. They soon began to make inroads into the neighbouring country. The Spaniards, roused from their lethargy by these depredations, surprised them in the midst of their festivity over their booty, and carried them off prisoners. They were conducted to Mexico, and ended their days in the mines. Those who escaped took refuge in the Bay of Honduras, where they were joined by some wandering freebooters of North America. In process of time they increased to fifteen hundred men; and the state of plenty and licentious independence in which they lived, reconciled them to the hardships of their employment, as well as to the inconveniencies of the country, which is low, extremely marshy, and prodigiously infested with that species of gnats called musketoes. Strong entrenchments secured them and their provisions: they confined themselves to those employments which their unhappy companions lamented they had ever neglected; and they took care not to penetrate into the interior part of the country, to cut wood, without being well armed.

The industry of these lawless men was crowned with the greatest success. The ton of wood, which had been sold as high as forty pounds sterling, was gradually reduced to less than one fourth of that price. But this disadvantage in value was compensated by the quantity sold. The cutters, or Bay-men, as they were called, delivered up the produce of their labours either to the people of Jamaica, who brought them Madeira wine, brandy, and cloaths; or to the English traders of North America, who supplied them with provisions. Alarmed at this encroachment, which reduced their trade at Campeachy to nothing, the Spaniards endeavoured by negotiation, remonstrances, and by open force, to prevent the English from establishing themselves in that part of the American continent; but after struggling against it for more than a century, the disasters of last war extorted from the court of Madrid a reluctant consent to tolerate this colony of foreigners in the heart of its dominions*.

In consequence of that humiliating concession, the logwood cutters are authorised to prosecute their labours, without fear or interruption, from Hanover Bay, on the east side of Yucatan, to the bottom of the Bay of Honduras, including about fifty leagues of the shore. They do not, however, form any regular colony, any more than their predecessors, the Buccaneers. But as no society, not even among robbers, can subsist without some kind of compact, the logwood cutters have agreed to certain regulations among themselves; and they elect a chief, with the name of king, to see that those regulations are observed,

* Treaty of Paris, Art. xviii.

A. W. IT of a part of MEXICO, comprehending the District or Province of GUATEMALA,
 From the best AUTHORITIES, by M^R B.



though they pay little regard to his authority. Like most elective sovereigns, he is a mere mock-monarch, and the greatest disorders prevail among his unruly subjects. The English government is therefore obliged to send judges, occasionally, from Jamaica to Yucatan; and the commander of the king's frigate, who brings the commissions, takes care to see that they have their complete execution*.

The quantity of wood annually furnished by this settlement has been computed at twenty thousand tons, a very considerable export; but the trade is said to have declined of late years, and since it obtained a legal sanction. The cause of this decline is thus explained. The logwood produced on the west coast of Yucatan, where the soil is drier, is in quality far superior to that which grows on the marshy grounds where the English are settled; and the Spanish court, by encouraging the cutting of the former, and permitting the importation of it without any duty, has given such vigour to this branch of their trade, that the logwood which the English bring to market has sunk so much in value, as scarcely to render it an object of commerce†. It is to be hoped, however, that the superior industry of the English will, in some measure, supply the fall in price; and as the wood is found in much greater abundance on the east than the west coast of Yucatan, that this branch of our trade will not only recover its former importance, but attain that degree of consequence which might have expected its legal establishment.

We come next to the audience of Guatemala, which extends its jurisdiction over three hundred leagues to the south, an hundred to the north, sixty to the east, and twelve to the west, towards the South Sea. There is no country in this part of the New World where nature has lavished her gifts with greater profusion. The air is every where wholesome, and the climate temperate. Poultry and game are found here in the greatest abundance, and of an excellent flavour. No territory on the globe produces better corn. The rivers, lakes, and sea, every where abound with excellent fish. The cattle have multiplied to such a degree, that it is become necessary to kill all that roam wild on the mountains, lest they should prejudice agriculture by their excessive numbers.

The first province in this audience, according to our progress, is Chiapa, an inland territory, well cultivated, and extremely fertile. Here the European fruits, especially apples and pears, are produced in the greatest perfection, and the breed of horses are esteemed the best in New Spain. But what chiefly distinguishes Chiapa is its Indian town, known by the name of Dos Indos, which may be regarded as the metropolis of the original Mexicans. It is pleasantly situated by the banks of a river, and supposed to contain twenty thousand inhabitants, who are industrious, intelligent, and of a friendly and amiable disposition. Their character is the best refutation of those philosophers who would represent the native Americans, from reasonings founded on their present depressed state, as an in-

* Present State of the West-Indies.
Amer. book vii.

† Raynal, lib. vi. Robertson, Hist.

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ferior order of human beings; and is sufficient to convince the Spaniards, that they would have derived more essential advantages from treating the Indians as fellow-creatures, than as beasts of burden. The inhabitants of Dos Indos are not only peculiarly expert at all kinds of martial exercises, in which they frequently employ themselves, but they are painters, musicians, and poets. They have their theatres and other public amusements, and are particularly ingenious in making pictures and cloths of feathers, after the manner of their ancestors, and figured stuffs of different coloured wool, which the best manufacturers in Europe need not be ashamed to own. The spirit which inspires them with this elegance and ingenuity they owe to their exemption from servitude; and that partly to the barrenness of their country in mines, and partly to the famous Las Casas, their bishop, who protected them against oppression, while alive, and obtained privileges for them which the Spaniards have always respected. Cividad Real, the Spanish capital of this province, is neither populous nor splendid*.

The province of Guatimala, which is one of the largest in New Spain, was conquered in the years 1524 and 1525, by the celebrated Pedro de Alvarado. He built in it several towns, and particularly the capital, which bore the name of the province. It was situated in a valley about three miles broad, which is bounded by two pretty lofty mountains. From the mountain towards the south run several rivulets and fountains, that delightfully refresh the villages situated on the declivity, and keep up a perpetual succession of flowers and fruits; but the aspect of the mountain towards the north is terrible: it is covered with ashes and calcined stones, and no verdure is ever seen upon it. A kind of rumbling noise, which the inhabitants used to ascribe to the boiling of metals that are in a state of fusion, is continually heard. From these internal furnaces issue flames and torrents of sulphur, which fill the air with horrible infection. Hence Guatimala, according to the adage of the country, was said to be situated between heaven and hell. Where it is now heaven only knows; for it was totally swallowed up by an earthquake in April 1773. It formerly experienced a terrible shock in 1541, when an incredible number of people are said to have lost their lives: but the late blow seems to be final, as there are now no traces of it left. When last destroyed it is supposed to have contained between forty and fifty thousand inhabitants, and the loss in money and goods is computed at fifteen millions sterling.

The principal commerce of this province with Spain, is by means of the indigo that it produces, which is reputed the best that comes from America. In the cultivation of it some Negroes are employed, and part of those Indians which have survived the tyranny of their conquerors. The labours of these unhappy men annually supply Europe alone with two thousand five hundred furrors of indigo, which sell, on an average, at Cadiz, for seventy-three pounds ten shillings each. This rich produce, with some other articles of less consideration, are conveyed upon mules to the town of St. Thomas, situated sixty leagues from Guatimala, at the

* Gage's Survey.

extremity of a very deep lake, which loses itself in the gulph of Honduras. Here these commodities remain, till they are exchanged for others brought from Spain, in vessels of a moderate size, which commonly arrive in the months of July and August.

The other towns of any consideration in this province are La Trinadada or Sonsonate, situated in a bay of the South Sea, about two miles to the south-east of the capital, containing about five hundred Spanish families, besides Indians and mulattoes; St. Michael, another sea-port, to the eastward of the former, having about six hundred families; and Amapalla, standing upon a fine bay to the eastward of St. Michael, with above an hundred Spanish families, who trade largely in cochineal, cocoa, hides, indigo, and the other commodities of the province.

Between the gulph of Honduras and the province of Guatemala, lies the province of Vera Paz; so called, because the natives submitted without resistance, and religiously maintained the treaty made with the Spaniards. The extent of this province is but forty leagues in length, and about twenty in breadth. It is neither remarkable for its fertility nor populousness, to which the woods that overspread the country, and the frequency of earthquakes, are great and insuperable impediments. The Spaniards, however, find it worth maintaining, on account of the cotton, medicinal gums, dying drugs, and other valuable commodities which it yields. There was formerly gold in the Golfo Dolce, but now it is either entirely exhausted, or so scarce as not to reward the trouble of searching for it. Vera Paz, the capital, is a pretty well built town, but neither large nor magnificent; and may truly be said to be emblematical of the real situation of the inhabitants, who enjoy in moderation the conveniencies of life, without opulence or grandeur. There is properly no other town in the province, but there are several Indian villages, some of which contain five hundred families. These are chiefly in the mountains, where the natives live in a state of freedom, and resemble those of Chiapa in their industry, ingenuity, and accomplishments*.

The province of Honduras, above an hundred leagues in length, and sixty in breadth, is the next in situation. On the north it is skirted by the bay of the same name, and on the east by the North Sea: it has on the south the provinces of Nicaragua and Guatemala, and is bounded on the west by Vera Paz. Though this country possesses many natural advantages, good harbours, a rich soil, and exuberant pastures, it is but thinly peopled. The reputation which it at first acquired from its gold mines was but transitory: they soon sunk into total oblivion, after having proved the grave of near a million of Indians. The territory which those Indians inhabited remains uncultivated and waste, and is now the poorest part of all America. Both the people and the lands were sacrificed to the pernicious thirst of gold, and the gold by no means answered the expectations that were formed of it. The only articles that Honduras at

* Gage's Survey.

BOOK II.

present exports to Europe are hides, cassia, and sarsaparilla. Its capital called by the Indians Comagaya, and by the Spaniards Valladolid, is the see of a bishop, and a considerable inland town. As its trade is so small, its sea-ports cannot be of much consequence. Truxillo, however, derives some degree of importance from its contraband traffic, and Omoa is defended by a tolerable fortification.

We now come to the province of Nicaragua, of which frequent mention has been made in relating the first voyages of the Spaniards to America, and also during the conquest of Peru. It is washed both by the North and South Seas. The air is clear and healthy; the soil excellent; and the whole country is finely diversified with mountains, vallies, extensive lakes, and beautiful savannas or meadows, on which feed numerous herds of cattle. Corn, timber, wax, tar, cordage and sugar, are its principal commodities. These it exports to a considerable amount; and what adds equally to the beauty and convenience of Nicaragua, is an immense lake of the same name, that runs across the country from within a few leagues of the South Sea, until it discharges itself into the West Indian ocean, or North Sea, by a spacious river, at the mouth of which is the port of St. Juan. The tides rise quite up to the lake; so that every species of fish peculiar to fresh or salt water is found there in great abundance, and almost together.

Happy is it for the natives that their country affords no mines; for in that case their bonds must have been drawn tighter, and their lives wasted in digging for the precious metals. As it is otherwise, both the Spaniards and Indians employ themselves in agriculture, for which no part of America affords more encouragement, nor is it carried to such perfection in any of the Spanish settlements. They have also erected divers manufactures, by means of which they draw great quantities of gold and silver from the other provinces. Hence it is observed, even by the Spaniards, that the industry of Nicaragua is a more permanent and secure treasure, than the mines of Mexico and Peru, as the money drawn from it remains in the country. It is likewise observed, that a more free and bold spirit of liberty reigns here, than in any other of the Spanish provinces, the natural consequence of self-independence. Leon, its capital, is situated at the head of the great lake, within twenty miles of the South Sea. The houses are well built, though low, on account of the frequent shocks of earthquakes in those parts. The Spanish inhabitants do not exceed two thousand; but the town is notwithstanding pretty populous, including the natives, who live here with more convenience, and under more social institutions, than in any other city of America*.

On the South Sea, fourteen leagues to the west of Leon, stands Realejo, which not only serves the purposes of a port to this city and province, but also to that of Guatimala, with which it carries on a considerable trade: and eighteen leagues to the east of the capital is seated Granada, a larger, finer, and more populous city than Leon itself. Its more advanced situation upon the lake brings the mer-

* Voyag. de Correal. Gage's Survey.

chants thither from all quarters, and renders it one of the greatest marts between the two seas. All those cities are famous in the history of the Buccaneers, who more than once plundered, burnt, or ransomed them.

From the lake of Nicaragua to the isthmus of Panama, where the viceroyalty of New Spain ends, the continent, more narrowly confined between the two seas, comprehends the two small provinces of Costa Rica and Veragua, both traversed by mountains covered with impenetrable forests. Their soil is dry, their climate unhealthy; and though they yield some gold, the only circumstance that prevents them from being abandoned, though neglected by the Spaniards, they are entitled to no particular attention.

A territory, however, less neglected claims our notice before we quit this part of the American continent. Between the sea and the Spanish provinces of Honduras and Nicaragua, extending from Cape Honduras to port St. Juan, lies a country inhabited by a free people, whose attachment to the English has long been remarkable, and who permit no other Europeans to visit their coasts. This space takes in an hundred and fifty leagues of the shore, and forms an obtuse angle at Cape Gracias a Dios, having one of its sides exposed to the north, the other to the east. The general name of Mosquitos is given to all the nations or tribes who occupy this tract, as well as to those who inhabit the inner space, between the coast and the higher chain of mountains which form the Spanish frontier, and their country, in like manner, is known by the name of Mosquita, or the Mosquito Shore. Of these tribes the Mosquitos are the most numerous, as well as the bravest. They muster about fifteen or eighteen hundred warriors. Their country, properly so called, is about Cape Gracias a Dios, near the mouth and on the banks of the great Cape river. It is one of the most healthy and beautiful spots in the world. Here are settled about thirty English families, who have begun plantations of sugar on the lands given them by the Mosquitos.

The government of this people is perfectly republican. They acknowledge no kind of permanent authority. In the wars which they carry on against the Spanish Indians, and which much obstruct their population, they chuse as their commander the most brave and experienced of their warriors; he, who on the most trying and perilous occasions, has given repeated proofs of his prudence and valour. After the war is over, his power ceases. The Mosquitos are distinguished into two sorts, the Red, and Black or Sambos. The first are the original inhabitants of the country, the second the descendants of about fifty negroes, whom a Portuguese captain had brought from Guinea and was carrying to Brazil, but who rendered themselves masters of the vessel, and threw all but one man overboard. The assistance of this man, however, was insufficient to enable them to navigate the vessel, which, left at the mercy of the winds, was driven upon Cape Gracias a Dios, where the crew fell into the hands of the Mosquitos, among whom the negroes lived for some time in a state of servitude, and afterwards became the companions of their dangers and toils. The Portuguese mariner was so much like a Spaniard, against whom the animosity of the Mosquitos is implacable, that

His life was with difficulty spared; and after he had been a slave for two years, it was determined to sacrifice him at the funeral of the master to whose lot he had fallen, that he might serve him in the other world. Luckily the Portuguese had but one eye. He represented to the general assembly of the nation, which was convened upon this occasion, that a one-eyed man could be of service to nobody in the other world, as it was difficult to see clear there even with two. His argument was sustained: the Mosquitos not only granted him his life, but also his liberty, with a wife, and the surname of "the Man who knows a great deal *."

The Mosquitos are divided into four principal tribes, under the protection of the English government, to which they submitted themselves early in the last century. They consider the governor of Jamaica, to whom this submission was paid, as the greatest potentate in the world. Their enmity against the Spaniards, by whom their ancestors were driven from their fertile possessions near the lake of Nicaragua, goes as far back as the conquest of Mexico, and their friendship for the English is as old as the first expeditions of the Buccaneers against their common enemy. Like all uncivilized nations, they have few wants, and are very indolent. "I am not hungry," is their common saying, when they do not chuse to work; nor do they ever labour but when this need is very sensibly felt. Then they go to hunt, fish, or to catch and harpoon turtle, an exercise at which they are very dexterous; or otherwise they hire themselves to the English settlers to cut mahogany, or to build canoes, which are sold at Jamaica for the purpose of fishing. Rice, cacao, indigo, tobacco, and other valuable productions might be cultivated to advantage in this country. At present England receives from it tyger and buck skins, dying woods of several kinds, gums and balsams, sarsaparilla, tortoise-shells, and zebra wood for the cabinet makers, but those only in small quantities. All the free tribes, both inland and upon the coast, are allies of the Mosquitos and of the English.

Besides this settlement, so unreasonably neglected, we find another English colony about twenty leagues to the east of Cape Honduras, at the mouth of *Black River*, by which name it is generally known. This place was during sixty years the asylum of the logwood cutters, when driven by the Spaniards from the forests of East Yucatan. There they waited in safety, till such time as their enemies retired; and as those expulsions were frequent, and always unforeseen, the ships that went to load with wood in the bay of Honduras, chose first to touch at Black River, in order to get intelligence, and determine, in consequence of it, of the manner of pursuing their voyage. Wood-cutters, sailors, deserters, and adventurers of every kind, fixed themselves insensibly in this place. They received merchandise in return for the fruits of their industry, and soon established a lucrative trade with the Spaniards in the inland parts. The last treaty of peace, which secured to the wood-cutters, as already mentioned, the uninterrupted enjoyment of their forests, far from making Black River be deserted, has given more activity to the settlement.

* Oxmlin, H.A. Fieeboot. Dampier's Voyage.





The sea coast here is sandy, generally low and swampy, with mangrove trees; but higher up, among the rivers and lagoons, the soil is more fertile, and produces many plantains, coco trees, maize, yams, and other vegetables. The passion for drinking rum has made the colony begin the planting of sugar canes. The rivers, as well as the lagoons, are extremely well stored with fish, and the forests are filled with deer and game. On the shores they catch the finest turtle, from March to June, and from May to the end of September. Besides this fishery, which is very advantageous, the Black River settlers cut mahogany and zebra wood, and gather a great deal of sarsaparilla. A colony so well situated, though neglected by government, cannot fail of increasing. It is one of those plants, which, placed by the hand of chance in a happy corner, flourish, multiply, and bear fruit of themselves, without the attention of the gardener.

C H A P. III.

The Spanish Settlements in South America.

AL L the Spanish dominions in South America, as already observed, were originally comprehended under one immense government, now divided into three. Among these Peru, the second great acquisition of the Spaniards in the New World, holds the first place, both in wealth and population. Its territory, which is very irregular, may be divided into three classes, of which the principal Cordeleras form the first. The summits of those mountains are lost in the clouds, and almost all of them are covered with enormous masses of snow, as old as the world. From several of these summits, which have in part tumbled down, and from the immense heaps of snow, torrents of smoke and flame issue. Such are the summits of Colopaxi, Tongouragua, and Sangai. The greatest part of the rest have formerly been volcanos, or will probably one day become such. History has only preserved to us the æra of their eruptions since the discovery of America; but the pumice stones, the calcined earths with which they are strewed, and the evident vestiges that the flame has left, are authentic testimonies of the reality of former eruptions. Their height is prodigious.

Cayambour, which is situated directly under the equator, and Antisena, which is only five leagues distant from it to the south, are more than eighteen thousand feet high, reckoning from the level of the sea; and Chimborazo, which is twenty thousand, two hundred, and eighty feet high†, surpasses more than one third the altitude of the pike of Teneriffe, the highest land in the ancient hemisphere. Pichincha and Carazon, where the French Academicians made most of their

* Voy. de Ulca, tom. II.



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• Vey. de Ulloa, tom. II.

observations with regard to the figure of the earth, have only thirteen thousand five hundred and eighty, and thirteen thousand eight hundred and ninety feet of absolute height; and this is the highest land that ever was ascended. Eternal snows have hitherto rendered summits of greater altitude inaccessible.

From this elevation, where the snow never melts, not even in the torrid zone, in descending eight or nine hundred feet, scarcely any thing is seen but naked rocks or dry sands. A little lower is perceived some moss, that covers the rocks; various kinds of heath, which, though green and damp, make a clear fire; and round hillocks of spongy earth, on which grow small radiated and starry plants, whose petals are like the leaves of yew. Throughout the whole of this space the snow is only temporary, but it continues sometimes whole weeks and months. Lower still the ground is commonly covered with a sort of loose grass, which rises a foot and an half, or two feet high. This species of hay is the proper characteristic of the mountains which the Spaniards call Paramos; a name by which they distinguish such uncultivated ground as is too high for wood to grow on it, and where the rain seldom falls otherwise than in the form of snow, though it immediately melts. In descending yet lower, to the height of about twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea, it is observed sometimes to snow and sometimes to rain*.

On leaving those mountains, others less considerable, which occupy the middle of Peru, present themselves. The summit of these is commonly cold, barren, and full of mines. The vallies between them are covered with numerous flocks, and seem to offer to agriculture the most copious harvest. There are seldom here above two months of winter; and in the greatest heat, it is only necessary to pass out of the sun into the shade, to enjoy the temperate zone. This rapid alternative of sensation, however, is not always invariable in a climate, which by the disposition of the ground alone often changes in the course of a league. But be it as it may, it is always found healthy. There is no malady peculiar to these districts, and those of our climate seldom there prevail.

The temperature of the low country is different from what is any where else found in the same latitudes. Having on one side the South Sea, and on the other the great ridge of the Andes or Cordeleras, through its whole length, the joint effects of the ocean and the mountains moderate the equinoctial heat in a manner equally agreeable and surprising. With a sky for the most part cloudy, which shields the inhabitants from the rays of the vertical sun, it never rains in lower Peru; but every night a soft benign dew broods upon the earth, and refreshes the grass and plants, so as to produce in some parts the greatest fertility. The want of rain, however, in many places is sensibly felt; though in others it is supplied by the vast number of streams, to which the frequent rains and the daily melting of snow on the mountains give rise. But, along the coast, the fields are in general sandy and barren; and none can be styled truly fertile, except

* Voyage de Condamine.

such as are watered by the rivers and streams, or the artificial canals dug from them.

Natural philosophy has exerted its utmost efforts to discover the cause of a phenomenon so extraordinary as the want of rain in Lower Peru. May it not be attributed to the south-west wind, which prevails the greatest part of the year, and to the prodigious height of the mountains, whose summits are covered with eternal snow?—The country situated between both, being continually cooled on one side and heated on the other, maintains so equal a temperature, that the vapours which rise can never be condensed so far as to be resolved into water. Hence the houses, though only built of crude brick, or of earth mixed with a little grass, are of eternal duration. Their covering is nothing but a simple matting, placed horizontally, with a layer of ashes an inch thick above, to absorb the moisture of the fog.

The same causes that hinder it from raining in the flat country, undoubtedly also prevent storms. Such of the inhabitants of Peru as have never visited the mountains are perfect strangers to thunder and lightning. Their terror is equal to their astonishment, when, in other countries, they first are witnesses to so astonishing a spectacle. But they have a phenomenon much more dangerous and dreadful; and which, in its consequences, leaves much deeper impressions in the imagination of man, than thunder and all the ravages that accompany it. Earthquakes, which in most countries are so rare that whole ages pass without a single instance, are so common in Lower Peru, that the inhabitants have contracted a habit of reckoning them as a series of dates; and they are so much the more memorable, as their frequent return does not diminish their violence. There are few places on this extensive coast, which do not present some dreadful monument of those horrible convulsions of the earth.

This phenomenon, which is ever irregular in its sudden returns, is announced, however, by very perceptible and alarming symptoms. When the shock is considerable, it is preceded by a murmur in the air, the noise of which is like that of heavy rain, falling from a cloud that suddenly bursts and discharges its waters. This noise seems to be the effect of a vibration of the air, which is agitated in different directions. The birds are then observed to dart in their flight: their tail and their wings no longer serve them, as oars and helm, to sail in the fluid of the skies; they dash themselves in pieces against the walls, the trees, and the rocks. Whether it is the vertigo of nature that dizzies and confuses them, or the noxious vapours that deprive them of strength and skill to command their motions, we shall leave to be determined by the philosophers of ultimate causes.

To this tumult in the air is added the rumbling of the earth, whose cavities and deep recesses re-echo each other's noises. The dogs answer these previous tokens of a general disorder of nature, by howling in an extraordinary manner. The cattle stop; and, by a natural instinct, spread out their legs, that they may not fall. On these indications, the inhabitants instantly leave their houses, with terror impressed on their countenances, and seek in the great squares, or in the fields, an asylum from the fall of their roofs. The cries of children, the la-

mentations of women, the sudden darkness of an unexpected night *—every thing, in a word, conspires to aggravate the too real evils of a dire calamity by the excruciating tortures of imagination, which, distressed and confounded, loses in the contemplation of this disorder, the thought and courage necessary to provide against it.

Another singularity merits attention. All along the coast of Peru, a current sets strongly to the north : further out to sea, it runs with equal rapidity to the south. This current probably moves eddywise : having run as far as its moving cause impels it, it naturally passes back again where it has least resistance. The ignorance of this double current, made the navigation of the South Sea originally very uncertain and fatiguing ; but as it is now perfectly known, the course for those who pass from Chili to Peru is, to keep in towards the shore in their passage to Callao, and in their return to stand out a great many leagues to sea, and to take the southern current homewards. The same method, but reversed, is observed in the voyages between Panama, the other northern countries, and the ports of Peru.

The productions of Peru for exportation may be reduced to five articles : gold and silver, quicksilver, Vigonia wool, Jesuits bark, Agi or Cayenne pepper.

Of the nature of mines, and the different ways of procuring and refining the precious metals, an account has been given in the description of New Spain. The mines of gold in Peru are almost all in the northern part, not very remote from Lima ; those of silver, almost wholly in the southern. At first the gold mines tempted the avarice of the greater number of adventurers ; but fatal experience soon discouraged those, whom passion had not blinded. They clearly saw, that, for some enormous fortunes raised of a sudden, great numbers who possessed moderate ones were totally ruined. The gold mines sunk into such discredit, that, in order to prevent them from being abandoned, the government was obliged to take the twentieth part of their produce, instead of the fifth, which it at first received.

The mines of silver were more common, more equal, and more rich, and therefore were worked to more advantage. Of these the most famous is that of Potosi, which was discovered in 1545. An Indian, called Hualpa, pursuing some wild animals up the mountain of that name, and coming to a steep place, laid hold of a shrub to assist his ascent. That, yielding to his weight, came up by the roots, and discovered a mass of silver. At the same time he observed lumps of this metal adhering to the roots of the plant. With these first fruits of his discovery Hualpa hastened home, separated the silver from the foreign substances, and made use of it ; repairing occasionally, when his stock was exhausted, to his perpetual treasury. The change that had happened in his circumstances was remarked by his countryman Guanca, to whom he avowed the secret. The two friends could not keep their own counsel, and enjoy their good fortune. They quarrelled ; and the indiscreet confident discovered the whole to his master Villaroel, a Spaniard that was settled in the neighbourhood. On this the mine became known, was worked with im-

* Ulloa, vol. vii. c. 7.

menſe advantage, and a great many others ſcarce leſs rich, were found in the ſame mountain.

The fame of theſe important diſcoveries drew people from all parts to Potoſi, and a town was ſoon built at the foot of the mountain, containing ſixty thouſand Indians and ten thouſand Spaniards. Though the adjacent country is remarkably barren, producing neither grain, fruits, herbs, or other eſculents, the town is amply ſupplied, both with the neceſſaries and the luxuries of life. Some provinces ſend thither the beſt of their grain and fruits; others their cattle and manufactures; and thoſe who trade in European goods reſort to Potoſi, as to a market where there is a great demand, and no want of ſilver to give in exchange for them*. Induſtry, which every where follows the current of money, could not ſearch for it with ſo much ſucceſs as at this ſource.

In purifying gold and ſilver, as already obſerved, the Spaniards make uſe of mercury. The demand for this mineral in Peru is great, and is amply ſupplied by the mine of Guanca Velica, which was diſcovered in 1564. This mine, which is not found to diminifh, is dug in a prodigious large mountain, ſixty leagues from Lima. In its profound abyſs are ſeen ſtreets, ſquares, and a chapel, where the myſteries of religion, on all feſtivals, are celebrated. Millions of flambeaux are continually kept to enlighten it. The earth, which contains the quickſilver, is of a whitifh red, like burnt brick. It is pounded and put into an earthen kiln, the upper part of which is a vault like an oven, ſomewhat of a ſpherical form, extended an on iron grate covered with earth, under which a gentle heat is kept up with the herb *icho*, which is fitter for this proceſs than any other combuſtible matter, and the cutting of which, on that account, is prohibited for twenty leagues round the mine. The heat, which penetrates this earth, makes the pounded mineral ſo hot, that the quickſilver iſſues out of it volatilifed in ſmoke. But as the upper part of the kiln is cloſely ſtopped, the ſmoke finds no vent but by a ſmall hole, which has a communication with a ſeries of little round earthen veſſels, or retorts, the necks of which are inſerted into each other. There the ſmoke circulates, and condenſes by means of a little water at the bottom of each veſſel, into which the quickſilver falls in a pure heavy liquid.

Private people work this mine at their own expence, and of courſe might be expected to reap the profits ariſing from it on paying a certain duty. But the caſe is otherwiſe. They are obliged to deliver to government, at a ſtated price, all the mercury they extract; and as ſoon as they have procured the quantity, which the demands of one year require, the work is ſuſpended. Part of the mercury is ſold on the ſpot, and the reſt is ſent to the royal magazines throughout all Peru, whence it is delivered out at eighteen pounds ſeven ſhillings and ſixpence per hundred weight, the ſame price it is ſold for in Mexico. This regulation, from which the crown of Spain raiſes a conſiderable revenue, has been con-

* Voyage de Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 13. The produce of the mines is ſomewhat diminifhed, but ſtill very conſiderable. Before the year 1638, they are ſaid to have yielded 21,255,043 dollars per annum. Id. *ibid*.

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sidered by an eminent political writer * in the same light as a tax upon the implements of husbandry :—and in one sense it may be regarded as such. But as it is observed † that the passion of searching for the precious metals is so violent in the Spanish colonies, as to overturn all sober plans of industry ; to make every other bounty of nature be neglected, and to bury in the earth, in visionary projects, great part of that treasure which is extracted from it, any regulation which tends to restrain such an excess must be considered as truly political ; more especially if it contributes to the support of government.

The mine of Guanica Velica generally affects those who work in it with convulsions. This and the other mines are all worked by the natives. These unfortunate victims of an insatiable avarice are crowded together, and plunged naked into those abysses, the greater part of which are deep, and all excessively cold. Their service is only for six months at a time ; but such as survive that term, which, as formerly observed, is often protracted under various pretences, having lost the sweetness of their former connections, generally settle in the neighbourhood of the mine, and become slaves for life. The effects of that servitude, more destructive than sword or pestilence, would yet be more fatal were it not for the use of coca. The coca is a shrub, which hardly ever rises higher than from three to four feet. Its fruit is deposited in bunches ; and is red when it begins to ripen, and black when it has attained its maturity. Its leaf, which is soft, and of a pale green, resembling that of the myrtle, is the delight of the Peruvians. They chew it, after having mixed it with a white earth, which they call *mambis*. Its qualities seem to be of the opiate kind, and to have some similitude to those of tobacco, for it produces a kind of stupid composure. It is an antidote against poisons and poisonous effluvia, and makes those who use it subsist a long time without food. If the unhappy wretches, who are buried in the mines, are in want of it, they cease working, and no means whatsoever can compel them to resume their labour, nor would they be able without it to continue their exertions. Their oppressors therefore furnish them with as much as they require, subtracting the price of it from their daily wages. It is produced in great quantities in the southern provinces of Peru, where it is cultivated by the Indians, but that growing wild in the neighbourhood of Cuzco is accounted the best ‡.

Vigonia wool, one of the most valuable commodities of Peru, is shorn from a species of animals peculiar to the country, and in other respects beneficial to man ; namely, the Llama, the Pacos, the Guanaco, and Vicuna.

The llama is about four feet high, and five in length, of which its neck alone takes up one half. Its head, resembling that of the camel, is well made, with large eyes, a long snout, and thick lips. Its mouth has no incisors in the upper jaw. Its feet are cloven like those of the ox, but furnished with a spur behind, which enables it to fasten itself in the sides of steep places, where it delights to climb. The wool is short on its back, but long on its sides. The llamas were employed by the ancient Peruvians as beasts of burden, and they are still used as such by

* Raynal.

† See book ii. c. 2. of this work, and Robertson, b. vii.

‡ Ulloa, lib. vi. c. 3. This coca is exactly the same with the betel of the East Indies. Id. ibid.

the modern natives of the country. They carry about an hundred weight, and move with a slow but firm pace, at the rate of four or five leagues a day, in roads that are impracticable to other animals; descending through gullies, and climbing up rocks, where men cannot follow them. After four or five days journey, they rest of their own accord for twenty-four hours. Nature seems to have formed them for the people of the climate where they are produced, mild and phlegmatic, moderate and prudent, like the Peruvians. When they stop, they bend their knees and incline their body in such a manner as not to discompose their burden. As soon as they hear their driver whistle, they rise with the same care, and proceed on their journey. They browse on the grass they find in their way, and chew the cud at night; even when asleep, reclining on their breast, with their feet doubled under their belly. They are neither dispirited by fasting nor drudgery, while they have any strength remaining; but, when they are totally exhausted, or fall under their burden, it is to no purpose to harass or beat them. They will continue obstinate; striking their heads against the ground, first on one side then on the other, till they kill themselves. They never defend themselves either with their feet or teeth; but, in the height of their indignation, content themselves with spitting in the face of those who insult them.

The pacos is to the llama what the ass is to the horse, a subordinate species, smaller in size, with short legs, and a flat snout, but of the same disposition, the same peculiarities, and the same constitution; formed, like the llama, to carry burdens, but more obstinate in its caprices, perhaps because it is weaker. These animals are so much the more useful to man, as their service costs him nothing. Their thick coat supplies the place of a pack-saddle; the little grass, which they find along the road, suffices for their food, and furnishes them with a plentiful and fresh saliva, which exempts them from the necessity of drinking.

The guanaco is a wild species of the llama, stronger, more sprightly, and more nimble than the domestic llamas; running like the stag, and climbing like the wild goat, covered with short wool, and of a fawn-colour. Though free, they like to collect in herds, sometimes to the number of two or three hundred. If they see a man, they at first survey him, with a look of greater astonishment than curiosity, then snuffing up the air, and neighing, all run together to the summit of the mountain. These animals seek the cold, travel on the ice, and sojourn within the regions of snow, dreading the heat of the low lands. They are found vigorous, and in vast numbers on the Sierras, which are of the same height with the Cordeleras; but they are both small and scarce in the heaths at the foot of the mountains. When they are hunted for their fleece, if they gain the rocks, neither men nor dogs can keep sight of them.

The Vicuna, a species of wild pacos, is still sonder of the summits of the mountains, of the snow, and of the ice. Their wool is longer, thicker set, and much finer, than that of the guanaco. Its colour resembles that of dried roses, and is so fixed by nature, that it cannot be altered in the hands of those who are employed in working it, and never changes by any accidents of weather, which

renders it of great value. It is almost as delicate as silk *. The vicunas are so timid, that their fear itself makes them an easy prey to the hunter. A company of men surround them, and drive them into narrow defiles, at the end of which are suspended pieces of cloth, or linen rags, on cords, raised three or four feet from the ground. These rags being agitated by the wind, strike such terror into the vicunas, that they stand crowded, and squeezed one against another, suffering themselves to be killed rather than fly; but if there happens to be among them a guanaco, which, being more adventurous, leaps over the cords, they follow it and escape.

All these animals belong so peculiarly to South America, and especially to the highest Cordeleras, that they are never seen on the side of Mexico, where the height of these mountains is considerably diminished. Attempts have been made to propagate the breed in Europe, but without success. The Spaniards, without reflecting, that these animals, even in Peru itself, sought the coldest parts, transported them to the burning plains of Andalusia. They might possibly have succeeded at the foot of the Alps or the Pyrenees †. The flesh of the llamas, when they are young, is good eating. The skin of the old ones serves the Indians for shoes, and the Spaniards for harness. The guanacos also might be eaten; but the vicunas are only sought after for their fleece, and for the bezoar that they produce.

The wool of the llamas, pacos, guanacos, and vicunas, was in general usefully employed by the Peruvians before the conquest. The inhabitants of Cuzco made tapestry of it for the use of the court, in which flowers, birds, and trees were pretty well imitated. It served also to make mantles which were worn over a shirt of cotton. After the conquest, all the natives were obliged to wear cloaths. As the oppression under which they groaned did not allow them to exercise their former industry, they contented themselves with the coarser cloaths of Europe, for which they were made to pay an exorbitant price. When the gold and silver, which had escaped the rapacity of the conquerors, were exhausted, and the government a little more settled, they attempted to establish their national manufactures, and with success; but these were some time after prohibited, on account of the deficiency which they occasioned in the exports of the mother-country. The impossibility, however, which the Peruvians found of purchasing foreign stuffs, and paying their taxes, occasioned permission to be given at the end of ten years for their re-establishment. They have not since been discontinued, and have been brought to as great a degree of perfection as it is possible under a continual tyranny. With the wool of the vicuna, the Peruvians make at Cuzco, and in its territory, stockings, handkerchiefs, and scarfs. The same wool, mixed with that of the sheep, introduced from Europe, but which has exceedingly degenerated, serves also for carpets, which are admirable, and makes tolerably fine cloth; and fleeces of an inferior

* Possibly the famous sheep of Cachemir, of whose wool they make the little white cloths, so much valued in India, may be of this species. *Europ. Set. Amer. par. II. c. 9.* To this conjecture and her may be added that *vigonia* is probably a corruption of *vicuna* wool.

† Buffon, Hist. Nat. Raynal, Hist. Philos. et Politiq.

quality, as well as what are shorn from the llama, guanaco, and pacos, are employed in ferges, druggets, and all kinds of coarser stuffs. These manufactures would have been multiplied, notwithstanding the oppressions under which the people labour, if the spirit of destruction had not fallen upon animals as well as upon men. The vicuna, in particular, has been hunted down, and its valuable wool exported annually, both to New and Old Spain, to a very considerable amount.

The next great article of exportation, no less peculiar to South America, is Jesuits bark; so well known in medicine, as a specific in intermitting disorders, and an antidote against mortification, besides many other valuable purposes which experience daily finds it to answer. The tree that bears it is about the common size of a cherry-tree: its leaves are long and indented; and it bears a long reddish flower, from which arises a sort of husk that envelopes a flat white kernel, not unlike an almond. This tree grows principally in the mountainous parts of Peru, and is found in the greatest plenty and perfection in the province of Quito. M. Condamine informs us, that it grows on the hither side of the Andes, nowise inferior to the Peruvian in quantity or goodness. The best is produced on the high and rocky grounds, as appears to be the case with most medicinal plants, whose juices are more powerful and efficacious when elaborated in such situations.

This bark was first introduced into Europe by the Jesuits, whence it had its name of Jesuits Bark. Its medicinal virtue is said to have been discovered by the following accident. An Indian lingering under an intermitting fever, being parched with thirst, happened to drink of the water of a lake into which some of the trees had fallen, and was cured as if by miracle. The Jesuits, with their usual sagacity, took advantage of this circumstance: they made experiments with the bark; found it to answer, and preserved it for some time as a secret, in order to increase the wealth and consequence of their fraternity. At length Juan de Vega, physician to one of the viceroys of Peru, who had proved its salutary effects, established it in Spain as an article of commerce, in 1640, at the enormous price of an hundred pesos a pound. The price is now comparatively inconsiderable; but as the consumption of it is greater, the bark still forms a very valuable article in the trade of Spanish America.

Agi, or Cayenne pepper, is also a considerable article in the trade of Peru. It is produced in the greatest quantity in the vale of Arica, whence it is exported to the annual amount of six hundred thousand pesos*. The district that produces this pepper in such abundance is but small, and naturally barren. It owes its fertility in pepper as well as in grain to a very extraordinary manure, brought from an island on the coast, named Iquiqua. This is a sort of yellowish substance of a foetid smell, and is generally supposed to be the dung of sea fowls, vast numbers of which are continually seen on that and the adjacent islands. But whether we consider it as the dung of these fowls, or a particular species of earth, it is almost equally difficult to conceive how the small island of Iquiqua, not above two miles

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 12.

in circumference, can furnish such immense quantities; and after supplying the distant parts during two centuries, with upwards of twelve ship-loads annually, besides a much greater quantity, for the use of the neighbourhood, should continue apparently undiminished in height or otherwise. These, however, are inquiries that do not properly belong to this work, and require a more perfect knowledge of all the circumstances relative to their object, than can be gathered from travellers.

This manure, which was known, as formerly observed, to the ancient Peruvians, is made use of by the Spaniards in other cultures besides that of pepper, several of which, introduced from Europe, have been carried to a considerable degree of perfection. The vine thrives sufficiently on the sandy coasts of Peru, at Ica, Pisca, Nasca, Moquequa, and Truxillo, to furnish the colony with wine and brandy adequate to its wants. Olives thrive still better, and yield abundance of oil, which is greatly superior to that of the mother-country. The sugar-cane succeeds so well, that none of any other growth can be compared to these produced, though in no great quantity, on this coast, where it never rains. Wheat and barley are cultivated in the inland country, but not with remarkable success. The natives, as formerly, live chiefly upon maize.

According to the order hitherto pursued, we should now proceed to an account of Peru, and of all the Spanish dominions in South America, as divided into audiences, and of these, as again subdivided into provinces or districts; but the vast extent of the countries subject to the crown of Spain in this section of the American continent, makes a new method necessary. In order to preserve the unity of the subject, which would otherwise be broken into an infinitude of minute parts, we shall attempt a moral and commercial survey, instead of a geographical description; a picture, rather than a chart. We shall endeavour to place the chief objects in a conspicuous point of view, and throw the rest into shade. Towns and provinces remote in situation, but connected by commerce, by an union or opposition of interests, will therefore often follow in succession, that the reader may be enabled to form a distinct judgment of the wealth and power of the whole Spanish empire to the south of the isthmus of Panama, in place of possessing only a vague idea of its separate, involved, and widely spreading branches.

In proceeding towards the low country from Potosi, which we have seen rising out of the desert, as if by magical incantation, at the waving of the potent rod of the god Mammon, the first object that claims our attention is Cuzco, the ancient capital of Peru, and the seat of the Incas. It stands as formerly on a very irregular ground on the sides of the mountains, there being no situation more convenient near it, and is still a considerable city. The number of its inhabitants are not mentioned by Ulloa, but Correal and Laet make them amount to between three and four thousand Spaniards, and twelve thousand Indians. *. The natives who, in general have the greatest aversion against living

* Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIII.





in cities, because inhabited by their oppressors, still voluntarily chuse to reside at Cuzco: they love to behold that venerable place, from which those holy laws originated that rendered their ancestors so happy. The remembrance of these inspires them with an elevation of soul; hence they are found to be more ingenious on this celebrated spot, than in any other part of their ancient empire. Besides the woollen manufactures already mentioned, they have also some of cotton, and work largely in leather in all its branches, but particularly in painting and gilding it for ornament in grooms. Other artists are employed in making with wood or ivory pieces of inlaid work and sculpture, and in delineating figures on the marble that is found at Cucuca, or on linen imported from Europe. The drawing of these is not bad, but the colours are neither exact nor permanent. If the Indians, who invent nothing, but are excellent imitators, had able masters, and proper models, they would make at least good copyists. Towards the close of the last century, the works of a Peruvian painter, named Michael de St. James, were carried to Rome, and the connoisseurs discovered marks of genius in them. The city of Cuzco is well built. Most of the houses are of stone, happily contrived, and covered with tiles, whose lively red gives them an elegant appearance. The apartments are spacious, and finely decorated; the mouldings of all the doors are gilt; the other ornaments are no less rich, and the furniture corresponds with that magnificence, both in elegance and sumptuousness*.

On a hill to the north of Cuzco, are the ruins of a famous fort built by the Incas for their defence. From those ruins it appears, that the design of the Incas was to enclose the whole mountain with a prodigious wall, of such construction as to render the ascent of it impracticable to an army, in order to prevent all approach to the city. This wall was entirely of freestone, and strongly built, like all the other works of the Incas, but still more remarkable for its dimensions, and the largeness of the stones, which are of different magnitudes and figures. Those composing the principal parts of the work are of such prodigious size, that it is difficult to conceive how it was possible for the strength of man, unassisted by machines, to have brought them thither from the quarries. The interstices formed by the irregularities of these enormous masses are filled with smaller, and so closely joined as not to be perceived without a very narrow inspection†. Some leagues to the north of this fortress lies the valley of Yucay, where the Incas and great men of the empire had formerly their country-houses. The greater part of that delicious retreat, which still preserves its reputation, belongs to the bishop of Cuzco; and the rest is possessed by the principal citizens, who think there is something deficient in their system of happiness till they can purchase a piece of ground there. The sick usually repair thither in search of health, and it rarely happens but they find it‡.

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 12.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIII.

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About half way between Cuzco and Lima, stands the city of Guamagna, founded for the conveniency of carrying on trade between the ancient and the modern capital of Peru. It is situated on the declivities of some mountains of a moderate height, which, extending southward, inclose a spacious plain to the eastward of the town. This plain is watered by a small river descending from the neighbouring mountains; but the ground on which the city stands being higher than the bed of the river, the inhabitants are obliged to provide themselves with fountains. In the center of the town live at least twenty noble families, in spacious houses of a considerable height, built partly with stone, and covered with tiles. All these have extensive gardens and orchards; though it is no small trouble to keep them in order, by reason of the scarcity of water. The large Indian suburbs round this city add greatly to its extent; and the houses there, though low, being chiefly of stone, and roofed, very much augment the general appearance*.

The next city that claims our attention in this quarter of South America is Arequipa, delightfully situated in the valley of Quilca, twenty leagues from the sea, and near a hundred south of Lima. It is one of the largest towns in Peru. The houses are handsomely built of stone, and vaulted. Though not all of an equal height, they are generally lofty, commodious, finely decorated on the outside, and neatly furnished within. The temperature of the air here is so remarkably mild, that there is never an excess either of heat or cold: hence the surrounding fields are perpetually covered with verdure, and enamelled with flowers; and the inhabitants in consequence of this perpetual spring, are exempted from the diseases which flow from the intemperature of the seasons. What farther contributes to the health of the inhabitants, is their care in keeping the streets clean by means of canals which extends to a river near the city, by which all the filth is swept away. But these pleasures and advantages are allayed by the dreadful shocks of earthquakes, to which, in common with all the low country of Peru, Arequipa is so subject, that it has been three times laid in ruins by these terrible convulsions of nature. It is still, however, very populous, and numbers among its inhabitants, many noble families; the fertility of the soil and the goodness of the air as well as the vicinity of the port of Aranta, inducing many of the Spaniards to settle upon this spot. Aranta is only twenty leagues distant from Arequipa, communicates with it by means of the river already mentioned, and is the next port to Callao, in point of excellence of any on this coast of the South Sea†.

Callao is the port of Lima, at about five miles distance, extending along the sea-coast, on a low flat point of land. The Spaniards have no harbour in the South Sea worthy to be compared with it in beauty, conveniency, or security. The largest vessels may lie with perfect safety in the road of Callao, the water being extremely deep, and the port shielded from the winds by the island of St. Lawrence, which also breaks the surges rolling from the south west. From the

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 12.

† Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 12. Hist. Gen. de Voyages, tom. XIII.

sea, the town makes a tolerable figure, having several public edifices, churches, and monasteries, though the number of inhabitants are but inconsiderable. The Spaniards have expended large sums in giving this important harbour all the advantages of strength that art could bestow; and the town is actually considered by their countrymen as little less than impregnable, though in fact both the garrison and fortifications are very trifling. The latter consisted of an inclosure flanked by ten bastions on the land side, and several redans and plain bastions on the edge of the sea, together with four strong batteries to command the port and road*; but these being demolished by the last great earthquake, have never since been thoroughly repaired, the money appropriated for that purpose by the court having been expended in other works, more agreeable to the designs of those intrusted with the viceroyalty of this part of the Spanish empire.

Lima, the seat of the viceroy, and the modern capital of Peru, is situated in a delicious plain, about two leagues from the sea, and nearly at an equal distance from the equator and the southern tropic, so as to unite, as it were, all the riches and delights of South America. The prospect from it on one side extends over a tranquil ocean, on the other it commands a distance of forty leagues, as far as the Cordeleras. A river of the same name washes the walls of Lima; and, when not swelled by the torrents from the mountains, is easily fordable. But as at other times it is equally rapid and deep, an elegant and spacious stone bridge is thrown over it, having at one end a superb gate, the architecture of which has been much admired. This gate forms the entrance into the city, and leads to the great square, which is very extensive, and richly ornamented. In the centre of this square is a fountain, equally remarkable for its beauty and grandeur; out of the middle of which rises a bronze statue of Fame, and on the angles are four small basons. The water is ejected through the trumpet of the statue, and also through the mouths of eight lions that surround it. The east side of the square is filled by the cathedral and the archiepiscopal palace, which rise above all the buildings in the city. The front of the palace, its columns, pilasters, and principal foundations, are of hewn stone. The cathedral, which resembles that of Seville, is adorned with a magnificent facade, or frontispiece, in the middle of which is the grand portal, set off by two handsome towers. Round the whole runs a spacious gallery, with a ballustrade of wood, resembling brass in colour; and at proper distances are several pyramids which greatly augment the magnificence of the structure. On the north side of the square is the viceroy's palace, in which are the several courts of justice, together with the offices of the revenue, and the state prison. This was formerly a very noble building, both in regard to its size and architecture, but the greater part of it being thrown down by the dreadful earthquake that visited the city in 1687, it has never regained its former stateliness.

The form of Lima is triangular; the base, or longest side, extending two miles along the banks of the river. Its greatest breadth, from north to south,

* Voy. de Frezier.

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is about a mile. It is surrounded with a brick wall, and flanked by thirty-four bastions, but without platforms or embrasures, the purpose of the fortifications being merely to defend it against any sudden attack of the natives. On the opposite side of the river is the suburb called St. Lazaro, all the streets of which, like those of the city, are broad, parallel, or at right angles, and form several squares of houses, each an hundred and fifty yards in front. The buildings of Lima, are generally low, but extremely commodious. They are slight with all the appearance of solidity; and that they may the better support the shocks of earthquakes, of which this city has had such frequent, and fatal experience, the principal parts are composed of wood, mortised into the rafters of the roof. Those parts which serve for walls, are lined both within and without with wild canes and osiers plastered over with clay, and white washed, so that none of the wood is to be seen. The fronts are painted in imitation of free stone: cornices and porticos are also added, painted of a stone-colour. Thus the whole imposes on the sight, and strangers suppose the houses to be built with those materials which they only imitate.

Superstition, which appears with the utmost pomp over all Spanish America, may be said to have erected her throne in Lima. The number and the riches of the churches and monasteries is altogether incredible. Ulloa enumerates no less than forty of the latter, and tells us that all the churches, both conventual and parochial are large, constructed partly of stone, and adorned with paintings and other decorations of great value; particularly the cathedral, and the churches of St. Dominic, St. Francis, St. Augustin, and the Fathers of Mercy, which surpass all description. But the wealth and pomp that is displayed on solemn occasions exceeds even imagination, an idea being only to be formed of it by the sight. The altars from their very bases to the borders of the paintings, are covered with massive silver, wrought into various kinds of ornaments. The walls also of the churches are hung with velvet, or tapestry of equal value, bordered with gold and silver fringes, and adorned with moveable pieces of plate curiously fashioned. If the eye is directed from the pillars, walls, and ceiling, to the lower part of the church, it is equally dazzled with glittering objects, which present themselves on all sides. Among these are candlesticks of massive silver, six or seven feet high, placed in two rows along the nave of the church; embossed tables of the same metal, supporting smaller candlesticks; and in the intervals between them pedestals, on which stand the statues of angels, all of the same metal. The whole church, in a word, is covered with plate, or something equal to it in value: but how much more costly are the materials, and the ornaments of such things as are more immediately employed in the service of religion!—In the richness of these there is a sort of emulation between the several churches. The gold of the chalices, ostensoriums, and other sacred vessels and utensils, are covered with pearls and diamonds in such profusion as to blind the spectator with their lustre; and the gold and silver stuffs for vestments and other decorations, are always the richest and most elegant of those brought over by the register ships*.

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 3.

Such was Lima, before the year 1746, when two thirds of the city were laid in ruins by a terrible earthquake, the eleventh by which it has suffered, and its port of Callao entirely swallowed up. It is now in a great measure restored to its former splendour, and said to be constructed nearly in the manner here described; but as no traveller has yet published an account of its buildings in their present state, this is not intended to be imposed upon the world as such. With respect to other particulars we are less at a loss. Lima is still the seat of government, as well as the great scene of business and amusement, and is supposed to contain sixty thousand inhabitants of all colours and conditions; Spaniards, Negroes, Indians, Mestizos, and other casts, proceeding from a mixture of the former.

The Spanish families in Lima are very numerous, that city containing at least twelve thousand whites, among whom are reckoned a third or fourth part of the most distinguished nobility of Peru; particularly forty-five counts and marquises, and a proportionable number of knights belonging to the military orders of Spain. Besides these, there are many families no less respectable, though without titles, that possess large estates, and live with equal pomp. They all keep a great number of slaves and other domestics; and those who affect distinction keep coaches, while others content themselves with calashes or chaises, which are so common in Lima, that no family of any substance is without one. The calashes, which are drawn by a single horse or mule, are very slight and airy; but on account of the gildings and other decorations, they sometimes cost a thousand pesos. The number of them is said to amount to five or six thousand.

The Negroes, mulattoes, and their descendants, form the greater number of the inhabitants. By them the mechanical arts are chiefly exercised; but this circumstance does not prevent Europeans from following the same employments, which are not here, as in some parts of Spanish America, accounted disgraceful. Gain, at Lima, is the universal passion, and the inhabitants pursue it by means of any trade, interest preponderating over every other consideration. No prejudice is allowed to interfere with it. The third and last class of the inhabitants are the Indians and Mestizos; but these are very few in proportion to the populousness of the city, and the multitude of the second class. They are employed in agriculture, in making earthen-ware, and bringing all kinds of provisions to market; domestic services being performed by Negroes and mulattoes, either slaves or freemen, though generally by the former.

The dress of the men at Lima does not differ essentially from that of Spain, except by an excess of gaiety, which reigns among persons of all conditions. Every one having a right to wear what he can purchase, unrestrained by law or custom, it is not unusual to see a mulatto, or any common mechanic, dressed in a tissue, equal to what can be worn by Spaniards of the first distinction. It may therefore be said, without exaggeration, that the richest stuffs, made in countries which are always inventing something new, are more generally seen at Lima than in any other place, either in the Old or New World. But in this article of luxury, the men are greatly exceeded by the women, whose dress is so rich and singular as to merit a particular description.

BOOK II.

In the choice of laces, more especially, the women of Lima carry their taste to a prodigious excess. Nor is this taste confined to women of quality: it has spread through persons of all ranks, except the lowest class of negroes. These laces are all of Flanders manufacture, no woman of fashion condescending to look upon any thing else. They are sewed to the linen of the women, which they entirely cover, and whose whole dress is perfectly different from the European. It consists of a pair of shoes, a shift, a petticoat of dimity, an open petticoat, and a jacket, which in summer is of linen, in winter of stuff: to this some add a mantelette, that the former may hang loose. The petticoat, which is usually tied below the waist, does not reach lower than the calf of the leg; thence nearly to the ankle, hangs a border of very fine lace, sewed to the bottom of the under petticoat, through which the ends of the garters are discovered, embroidered with gold or silver, and sometimes set with pearls. The upper petticoat, which is of velvet, or some rich stuff, is fringed all around, and crowded with the richest ornaments. Be these ornaments what they will, whether of ribbands, lace, or embroidery, they are always exquisitely fine. The shift sleeves, which are a yard and a half in length, and two yards in width, when worn for ornament, are covered with rolls of laces, variegated in such a manner as to render the whole truly elegant. Over the shift is worn the jacket, the sleeves of which are excessively large, of a circular figure, and consist of rows of lace, or slips of cambric or lawn, with lace disposed betwixt each, as are also the shift sleeves, even of those that do not affect excessive ornament. The body of the jacket is tied on the shoulders with ribbands fastened to the back of the stays; and the round sleeves of it being tucked up to the shoulders, are so disposed, together with those of the shift, as to form what may be termed four wings. If the jacket be not buttoned or clasped before, it is agreeably fastened on the shoulders. Those who use a close vest, fasten it with clasps, but wear over it the loose jacket already described; and over the petticoat is an apron of the same substance as the sleeves of the jacket, hanging down to the bottom of it.

One particular, on which the ladies of Lima chiefly value themselves, is the smallness of their feet, which is esteemed a particular beauty. From their infancy they are accustomed to wear tight shoes, that their feet may not grow beyond the size esteemed handsome. In general, they do not exceed five or six inches in length. Their shoes, which have little or no sole, are fastened with diamond buckles, or something very brilliant, in proportion to the circumstances of the wearer, as ornament is their only purpose; for the shoes are so made that they never loosen of themselves, nor do the buckles hinder them from being taken off. Their stockings are of white silk, delicately thin, that the leg, which is almost entirely displayed to view, may appear to more advantage.

The head-dress is still more agreeable, because it is perfectly natural. Of all the gifts which Heaven has bestowed upon the women of Lima, their hair is the most distinguished. It is generally black, and so thick and long, that it might serve as a veil for modesty, being capable of reaching below the girdle. They tie it up behind in six braided locks, through which a golden bod-



*O A Woman of Lima in full dress, a D^o behind her in undress,
 a Spaniard dress as they are in Peru, and a Mulatto and Negro's Servant.*

kin a little bent is inserted, having a cluster of diamonds at each end. On this bodkin the braided locks are suspended so as to touch the shoulders, while those tresses which are not attached to the head fall still lower in waving ringlets. These they never attempt to ornament, lest they should rob them of their native beauty; but on the front, and upper part of the head, they wear diamond aigrets, and the hair is formed into little curls, which descend from the beginning of the temples to the middle of the ear, and on each temple is a patch of black velvet. The ear-rings are of brilliants, intermixed with tufts of black silk covered with pearls. Their bracelets, rings, necklaces, are all remarkably rich, and from the centre of the bosom is suspended a plate of gold encrusted with diamonds, more superb than all the rest. A woman of condition, in a word, though undignified with titles or nobility, seldom appears full dressed without displaying in lace and jewels to the value of thirty or forty thousand pesos; and what more surprises strangers, is the indifference she affects for all these riches. Fashion makes it necessary that she should lose, or let fall some of her jewels, without taking notice of it, that she may always have something to replace or to add. Here, as at Mexico, a lady never walks abroad, except when attended by three or four negroe or mulatto slaves, dressed in livery like pages, and adorned with lace as their mistresses*.

The charms of the women of Lima are still more worthy of admiration than the richness of their dress. A fair and fresh complexion, without the help of art, eyes sparkling with vivacity, a countenance full of life and sprightliness, and a handsome shape render them altogether captivating. These ladies are remarkably fond of perfumes. They are never without amber: they scent their linen and their cloaths with it, and even their nosebags, as if there was something wanting to the natural fragrance of flowers. With flowers, of which they are no less fond, they adorn their sleeves, and sometimes their hair, like shepherdesses. The approach of a woman is announced by the delicious odours which she exhales. To this passion for flowers may be ascribed that vast profusion which are every morning exhibited in the great square of Lima, which has the appearance of a spacious garden. There the ladies are seen in gilt calashes, purchasing whatever strikes their fancies, without regard to price; while the men stand by in crowds, adoring and contemplating whatever nature has produced most charming to embellish and enchant the dream of life.

Where can all the delights of sense be enjoyed in greater perfection than in Peru?—It is there the proper province of the women to feel and communicate them. Among other pleasures, music holds a chief place in the affections of the women of Lima. Nothing is heard in every quarter, but the sound of voices and instruments. They have frequent balls, where they dance with a degree of levity that is altogether astonishing. They neglect the motions of the arms to attend to the agility of the feet, and especially to the inflexions of the body; which are images of the true emotions of voluptuousness, as the expression of the

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 5. Hist. Gen. des-Voyages, tom. XIII.

BOOK II.

countenance is the true accompaniment of dancing. The arms conspire to give grace to the attitude, but the ideas of pleasure are more strongly expressed by the body; hence in countries where these sensations are most strongly felt, dancing agitates the feet and the body more than the arms. Such is the case at Lima.

Among the many expedients which the women here practise to heighten and preserve their charms, they have one which the lovers of delicacy must wish they would consent to abandon, namely the use of *limpion*. This term is applied to small rolls of tobacco, four inches long, and nine lines in diameter, wrapped in the whitest thread, which they untwist as the tobacco waxes. The ladies put one end of the limpion into their mouth, and chew it for a moment, with an intention to keep the teeth clean, as its name imports *. This mastication is particularly used in public assemblies, where the women receive company. There is a drawing-room, along one side of which runs an alcove half a foot high, and five or six feet broad; and here it is that, carelessly seated, with cross-legs on carpets and superb cushions, the ladies pass whole days without changing their posture even to eat. They use little tables, placed before them for any work with which they chuse to amuse themselves. The men whom they admit to their conversation sit on elbow chairs, unless their adorers, from greater intimacy, are permitted to descend into the alcove, which is as it were the sanctuary of worship and of the idol.

Yet these goddesses love rather to be affable than haughty; and banishing ceremony, play on the harpsichord and guitar, and sing and dance when they are solicited. Their husbands are not the chief objects of their complaisance. As the greater part of the most considerable citizens of Lima are devoted to their courtizans, the rich heiresses are chiefly reserved for such Europeans as come over to America. The advantage which they have of making the fortunes of their husbands, naturally prompts them to exert an authority over them; but let them only have the sway of which they are so jealous, and they will prove constantly faithful †. So closely is virtue connected with a certain degree of pride!

The greater part of the inhabitants, however, to use their own expression, “marry behind the church;” that is to say, live in a state of concubinage. If the children who issue from this commerce are acknowledged by their parents, they inherit, and their birth incurs no stain. The bishop anathematizes every year at Easter, all who are connected by such illicit bonds: but what power have these vain terrors against the impulse of amorous desires, which are sanctified by custom! against the toleration or example of ecclesiastics of the second order! and against the climate, which is continually contending, and at last proves victorious over all the civil and religious laws that oppose its influence?

The climate of Lima is indeed remarkably favourable, and its territory abounds with whatever can heighten the enjoyment of life. It experiences the

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 10.

† Ibid, lib. vii. c. 4.

variety of the seasons, without feeling their severity. The country contiguous to the city is covered with gardens, which produce in the greatest perfection all the herbs and fruits known in Europe, besides those which are common to America. Lima also enjoys another singular advantage. The whole year may be considered as a summer in regard to the plenty and freshness of fruits. As the seasons of the year vary alternately in the vallies and the mountains, when the fruit season is over in the vallies, it begins in the mountains; and their distance from Lima not being above twenty-five leagues, the fruits are brought thither in such quantities as to afford a constant supply at all seasons.

Besides the gardens, orchards, and cultivated fields, with which the country round Lima is so delightfully varigated, there are other spots where nature herself furnishes beautiful prospects to the inhabitants, and plenty of excellent food for their cattle. Such are the hills of St. Christoval and Amancaes, whose perpetual verdure diversified in the spring with elegant flowers, seems to invite the citizens to a nearer enjoyment of the beauties which it presents at a distance to their view. Other parts in the neighbourhood are equally alluring; accordingly many families resort thither for the change of air, and the tranquillity of rural amusements. The hills called Amancaes, have their name from a certain flower that grows on them. It is yellow, and of the campanula form, with four pointed leaves. Its colour is remarkably brilliant, and in that wholly consists its value, being totally void of fragrance. Besides these delightful retreats, Lima has a public walk in the suburb of St. Lazaro, called Alameda, consisting of rows of orange and lemon trees; and a long the banks of the river is another called the Acho, to which there is a daily resort of coaches and calashes*.

The fertility of the soil, the goodness of the climate, and the convenient situation of Lima, concur to maintain in it a constant plenty. The sea is not less bountiful than the land, affording fish both in great variety and quantity. But nothing so much contributes to that abundance which is so generally enjoyed at Lima as its commerce. It could never have attained such a degree of splendor, if besides being the seat of the viceroy, it had not been also the chief mart of the trade of Peru. The opulence of its merchants, and the conveniency of its situation, make it the center of all the products and manufactures of the other provinces, together with those of Europe imported by the register ships. It supplies, as their common mother, all the other towns and cities in this part of South America. The produce of the sales in the inland parts of the kingdom is sent to Lima in bars of silver, which is coined at the mint in that city. The remittances made during the intervals of the register ships, are laid out in the manufactures of the country, great quantities of which come from Quito.

Besides this commerce, which is the most valuable, and transacted wholly by the capital, Lima has also its particular trade with the provinces both of

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 2.

BOOK II. North and South America. The most considerable article imported from the former is snuff, which is brought from the Havana to Mexico, and after being there improved, is forwarded to Lima, and thence distributed through all the provinces of Peru and Chili. Lima also receives from the ports of New Spain naphtha, tar, iron, and some indigo for dying. The kingdom Tierra Firma sends to Lima leaf-tobacco and pearls, which here find a good market; for besides the limpsions used by the ladies, and in much greater quantities by women of inferior condition, the custom of smoking tobacco is universal among the men, and pearls are worn by females of all casts and conditions. The timber used in building houses at Lima, or refitting ships, and building barques at Callao, is brought from Guayaquil, together with cacao; but the consumption of the latter is here very small, the tea made of the herb of Paragua being more generally in use than chocolate. Wine, brandy, raisins, olives and oil are sent from the coasts of Nasco and Pisco; and Lima is supplied from Chili with flour, wheat, lead, leather, cordage, wines, dried fruit, and some gold. Copper and tin in bars are brought from Coquimbo, from the mountains of Caxamarca, and Chacapoyas; canvass made of cotton for sails, and other stuffs of that kind, from Pita. From the southern provinces is sent vicuna wool for making hats, and some stuffs of a peculiar fineness, chiefly from Cuzco; and lastly from Paragua, the herb of that name, of which there is an amazing consumption, it being not only used in great quantities at Lima, but distributed among the other provinces as far as Quito. In a word, there is no province in Peru that does not remit to Lima its products and manufactures, and supply itself from that city with the necessary commodities. Hence Lima is the emporium to which people resort from all parts, and trade being always in a constant circulation, besides the accession which it receives from the perpetual resort of strangers, the families of rank are enabled to support the expences of that splendour already described; whereas without such assistance, they must either contract their expences, or fall victims to their ostentation.

From a commerce so extensive and important it might naturally be expected that vast fortunes would be acquired by individuals, especially as every branch of trade is attended with great profits; but the case is otherwise. A few instances excepted, very few merchants in Lima possess enormous wealth. This may partly be accounted for from the expensive mode of living, and partly from the equal manner in which trade is diffused, no man being allowed to engross too large a share, or to monopolize any valuable article. Hence results, what is extremely desirable in every country, and more especially in every commercial city, such a distribution of the goods of fortune as prevents any one from being left destitute. Nor is this equality the effect of any commercial regulations or statute laws, but of an emulation which inspires every one to perfect himself in the art of trade, for which the inhabitants of Lima in general have a peculiar aptitude. They both penetrate into the finesses of the seller, and artfully draw the purchaser into their views. They are blest with a remarkable talent for persuasion, as well as of artfully eluding objections, at the same time that they are

incapable of being persuaded except by their interest. They affect to slight what they are most desirous of purchasing, and by that means often make very advantageous bargains, which few can obtain from them. But notwithstanding all these precautions and evasions in buying and selling, for which they are so much distinguished, no set of traders are more punctual and honourable in performing their contracts than those of Lima *.

From Lima we naturally transport ourselves to Guayaquil. This city, which was built as early as the year 1534, stands at the distance of six leagues from the sea, on the banks of a river that has its source in the Cordeleras. It is defended by three forts, lately erected, and only garrisoned by the inhabitants. These forts are built with large pieces of wood, disposed in the form of palisades. The nature of this wood, which is proof against water, suits the moisture of the soil. It is mentioned in the relations of some Spanish philosophers, that, in this coast, as well as that of Guatimala, is found the *murex*, which yields that purple so much celebrated by the ancients, and which the moderns have imagined was lost. The shell that contains it adheres to the rocks which are washed by the sea. It is of the size of a large walnut. The liquor of this animal may be extracted two ways. Some kill it, after they have drawn it out of the shell; then press it with a knife from head to tail, separate from the body the part where the liquor is collected, and throw away the rest. When this operation, after being repeated on several of these animals, has afforded a certain quantity of fluid, the thread intended to be dyed is dipped in it, and the process is finished. The colour, which is at first of the whiteness of milk, becomes afterwards green, and is not purple till the thread is dry. Those who disapprove of this method draw the fish partly out of the shell; and then squeezing it, make it yield a fluid, which serves for dying. They repeat this experiment four times, at different intervals, but each time with less success. If they continue it the fish dies, by their destroying that which is the first principle of its life, and which it is no longer able to renew. No colour at present known can be compared to that which is dyed with the *murex*, either as to lustre, liveliness, or duration. It succeeds better with cotton than with wool, linen, or silk.

Besides this object of curiosity, Guayaquil furnishes the inland country of Peru with oxen, mules, salt, and salt-fish; and it supplies Europe and Mexico with a great quantity of cacao, but Lima, as already observed only with a small quantity, as there the herb of Paragua is generally preferred. It is the universal dock yard of the South Sea, and might partly become that of the mother-country, as no territory on the face of the globe abounds equally in wood for ship-building, and masts, either as to quantity or quality. Hemp and pitch, of which it is destitute, might easily be furnished by Chili and Guatimala.

But what renders Guayaquil of still more importance, is the advantage it possesses of being the necessary mart and bond of communication of the moun-

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 11.

tains of Peru with its vallies, with Panama, and with Mexico. All the commodities which these countries exchange pass through the hands of its merchants. The largest vessels stop at the island of Puna, which is situated at the entrance of the bay, and others go up the river about forty leagues. Notwithstanding so many sources of prosperity, the people of Guayaquil, whose numbers amount to about twenty thousand, are far from being wealthy. The fortunes of its inhabitants have successively been destroyed; nine times by fires, ascribed to the dissatisfactions of the negroes, and twice by pirates, who have sacked the town. Those fortunes which have been acquired since these fatal periods have not continued in the country. A climate where the wet is intolerable the whole year, and the rains incessant for nine months; where dangerous and noisome insects allow no tranquility; where diseases of the most opposite degree of temperature appear to be united; where people live in perpetual dread of losing their sight, is by no means proper to fix the residence of its inhabitants. Such persons are only seen here as have not acquired estates to enable them to remove elsewhere, and spend their days in indolence and pleasure. A taste, which predominates in South America, induces the most opulent to reside at Lima, which, before the abolition of the galleons, communicated chiefly with Europe by the way of Panama.

Panama is built on an isthmus of the same name, the coast of which is washed by the South Sea. This sea, as we have already seen, was originally discovered in 1513, by Nugnez de Balboa, who took possession of it for the crown of Castile. A settlement was established at Panama, which signifies a place abounding with fish, in the year 1518, by Pedrarias Davila, governor of Castilla del Oro, the name then given to Tierra Firme; and in 1521, the emperor Charles V. constituted it a city with the proper privileges. Being the gate through which an entrance was opened to Peru, it soon rose into great prosperity; but in 1670 it had the misfortune to be sacked and burnt by John Morgan, the famous English buccanier. Morgan had before taken Porto Bello and Morocab; and returning to the West India islands, he every where published his design of going to Panama, on which a great number of the desperate adventurers, who at that time infested those seas joined him. He first sailed for Chagre, where he landed some of his men, and at the same time battered the castle with his ships: but his success was owing to a very extraordinary accident, which deserves to be transmitted to posterity.

Finding his strength considerably diminished, by the great numbers killed and wounded by the shot from the fort, Morgan began to think it advisable to retreat, when an arrow, shot from the bow of an Indian, lodged in the eye of one of his companions. The person wounded being rendered desperate by the pain, drew the arrow from the wound; and with a remarkable firmness and presence of mind, wrapping one of its ends in cotton or tow, put it into his musket, which was ready loaded, and discharged it into the fort, where the roofs of the houses were of straw, and the sides of wood, according to the custom of that country.

country. The arrow fell on the roof, and immediately set it on fire. This was not at first observed by the besieged, who were busy in defending their walls, but the smoke and flames soon informed them of the inevitable destruction of the fort, and the magazine of powder which the flames must soon reach. Such an unexpected accident filled them with terror and confusion: the courage of the soldiers degenerated into tumult and disobedience; and every one being eager to save himself, the works were soon abandoned. Few were willing to encounter the double danger of being either burnt or blown up. The governor, however, willing to do all in his power, still defended the place, with sixteen or twenty soldiers who adhered to him even in that extremity. At last, covered with wounds, he fell a victim to his loyalty. The Buccaneers, encouraged by this event, pushed their attack with the utmost vigour; and the small number of defendants who remained, were obliged to surrender the fort, which the violence of the flames soon laid in ashes. Having surmounted this difficulty, Morgan and the greater part of his followers pursued their voyage up the river in boats and launches, leaving their ships at anchor for the defence of their new conquest. The detachment landed at Cruces; marched towards Panama; and on the Sabona, a spacious plain before the city, several smart skirmishes took place between the English and Spaniards, in which Morgan and his followers had always the advantage. In consequence of these successes, he made himself master of the city, but found it almost deserted, the inhabitants on seeing their troops defeated having retired into the woods. Morgan now plundered Panama at his leisure; and after having spent some days in collecting his booty, agreed for a considerable ransom to evacuate it, without damaging the buildings. But after the payment of the money, the city was set on fire; whether by chance or design is doubtful, as the hatred of the Buccaneers against the Spaniards was no less violent than their desire of plunder. Morgan, however, affirmed it was by accident, and the English writers in general represent it in that light*.

In consequence of this misfortune, Panama was removed to its present situation, which is distant about a league and a half from the former, and much more convenient. Being still, however, in a great measure built of wood, it was again consumed by fire in 1737; and as all kinds of materials for building are found here in the greatest abundance, the houses are now chiefly constructed of stone. The city is also surrounded by a free-stone wall, and garrisoned with a large body of regulars. Its harbour is formed by the shelter of several islands, particularly Isla de Naos, de Perico, and Flamencos. The anchoring place is before the second, and thence called Perico. Ships here lie very safe. Their distance from the city is about two leagues and an half, or three leagues.

Panama is the seat of a royal audience, and the capital of the kingdom of Tierra Firme. Great hopes were originally entertained from the gold mines discovered in the two provinces which compose this petty kingdom; namely, those of Panama and Darien. But that gleam of prosperity vanished instantly. The richest of these

* Oexmelin, Hist. Freeboot. Ulloa, lib. iii. c. 2.

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mines in the province of Darien, whence the Spaniards were expelled by the Indians, who have recovered their liberty; and the mines of the other province yield gold in such small quantities, and of so poor a quality, that they are very little worked. Panama, however, has a considerable trade in pearls, which are found in great quantities in the islands of its bay. These islands, to the number of forty-three, form a small archipelago; and in the fishery there established the inhabitants of Panama, and those of the neighbouring country, employ the greater part of their negroes. As the manner of conducting this fishery is not generally known, it shall be here described.

Eight, ten, or twenty negroes go out in a boat, under the command of an officer, to such parts as are known to produce pearls, and where the depth of the water is not above ten, twelve, or fifteen fathoms. Here they come to an anchor; and the negroes having a rope fastened round their bodies, the other end of which is made tight to the side of the boat, they carry with them a small weight to accelerate their sinking, and plunge into the water. On reaching the bottom they take up an oyster, which they put under the left arm; the second they hold in their left hand, and the third in their right. With these three oysters, and sometimes another in their mouth, they rise to breathe, and put them in a bag. When they have rested themselves awhile, and recovered their breath, they dive a second time; and thus continue, till they have either completed their task, or their strength fails them.

Every one of these negro divers is obliged to deliver daily to his master a certain fixed number of oysters. Those in which there are no pearls, or in which the pearl is not entirely formed, are not reckoned. What any negro can collect beyond the stipulated number, however large or beautiful, are his own property, and he may dispose of them to whom he pleases, though the master generally purchases them at a very small price*.

Besides the fatigue of this fishery, it is remarkably dangerous, by reason of the sea-monsters which abound about those islands where the pearls are found. Some of these, such as the sharks and tintoreras, devour the divers in an instant; and the *manta* fish, which derives its name from its figure, namely, that of a quilt, surrounds them, rolls them under its body, and squeezes them to death. In order to defend themselves against such enemies, every diver is armed with a knife or poinard; with which, the moment he perceives any of those voracious creatures, he attacks them with precaution, wounds them, and drives them away. The officer also keeps a watchful eye on the divers, and pulls the rope fixed to them, to put them on their guard, when he perceives them in danger. All this, however, is not sufficient to prevent many of the negroes from being destroyed or maimed†.

The pearls of Panama are commonly of a very fine water. Some of them are even remarkable for their size and figure. These were formerly sent to Europe; but since art has imitated them, and the general passion for diamonds farther dimi-

* Ulloa, lib. iii, c. 5.

† Id. *ibid.*

nished their value, they have found a new market, more advantageous than the first. They are carried to Lima, where, as we have seen, they are in high estimation. This branch of trade, however, has less contributed to give reputation to Panama than the advantage which it long enjoyed of being the mart for all the productions of Peru, that were destined for the old world. These riches, which were brought thither by a small fleet, were carried, some on mules, others by the river Chagre, to Porto Bello, situated on the northern side of the isthmus that separates the two seas.

This name, as we have formerly had occasion to observe, was given by Columbus to a harbour in the Gulph of Darien, because of its beauty and convenience. Thither in 1584 was removed the town of Nombre de Dios, on account of the insecurity of its former situation. Porto Bello is disposed in the form of a crescent, on the declivity of a mountain that surrounds the harbour. This celebrated harbour, which was very well defended by forts that admiral Vernon destroyed in 1739, and which are but imperfectly rebuilt, affords an entrance twelve hundred yards broad, but so straitened by rocks, even near the surface of the water, that it is reduced to a very narrow channel. Vessels can only be towed into it, as they always experience either contrary winds or a great calm; but, once entered, they enjoy perfect security.

The temperature of the climate of Porto Bello is so notorious, that it has been termed the *Grave of the Spaniards*. The galleons have more than once been left here, because they had lost the greater part of their crew. The English Squadron which blocked it up in 1726, would not have been able to return to Jamaica, if they had continued a few days longer. The native inhabitants themselves do not live long, and have all a weak constitution. It is rather considered as a disgrace to be obliged to reside here, and must certainly be the source of misery. Augmented by the situation of the town, which is surrounded by high mountains, without any intervals for the winds, the heat of Porto Bello is excessive. The trees on the mountains stand so thick as to intercept the rays of the sun, and consequently prevent the earth under their branches from being dried; hence arise copious exhalations, which form large clouds, and precipitate themselves in violent torrents of rain. There are no sooner over, than the sun breaks forth anew, and shines with his former splendour; but scarce has the ardour of his rays dried the surface of the ground not covered by the trees, than the atmosphere is again crowded with another collection of thick vapours, which afresh discharge themselves in a deluge of water. In this manner it continues through the whole day, and the night is subject to the like vicissitudes, but without any diminution of the heat. These torrents of rain are accompanied with such storms of thunder and lightning as must appal the stoutest heart, and followed by such a multitude of venomous reptiles as has induced the inhabitants to believe, that each drop of rain is transformed into a toad*. Their number is indeed sufficient to fill the soul with horror. When it has rained in the night, the

* Ulloa, lib. ii. c. 5.

BOOK II. streets and squares in the morning seem paved with these odious and noisome reptiles, whose common size is six inches long*.

The number of inhabitants in Porto Bello, as might be expected from this account of its climate, are very inconsiderable, and the greater part of those are negroes and mulattoes. The white families do not exceed thirty, and these are only such as are fixed to it by their employments. The garrison itself, consisting of an hundred and twenty men, does not continue in the place more than three months at a time. Before the beginning of the present century, no woman durst lie in here: she would have thought it devoting both herself and her child to death. This prejudice was removed by a woman of distinction, whose affection for her husband, confined to the spot by his office, led her to make the experiment. The event proved fortunate, and others have followed her example with equal success. Another opinion no less common, and seemingly better founded is, that the domestic animals of Europe, which have prodigiously multiplied in all other parts of the New World, lose their fruitfulness on coming to Porto Bello. It is at least certain, that no horses or asses are bred here, and that horned cattle decline so much in a few months after their arrival, though they do not want plenty of good pasture, as scarce to be eatable†. Even the plants introduced into this fatal region have never prospered.

These inconveniencies, however, did not prevent Porto Bello from becoming for a time the theatre of the richest commerce that ever was transacted on the face of the earth; while the gold, silver, and other productions of Peru and Chili were brought annually thither from Panama, to be exchanged for the manufactures of Europe, and the galleons arrived from Spain laden with every article of necessity, accommodation, and luxury. Then Porto Bello was immediately filled with people, its ports crowded with ships, and the neighbouring fields covered with droves of mules, laden with the precious metals. Instead of poverty, silence, and solitude, nothing was to be seen in the streets and squares, but bustling multitudes, bales of goods, and chests of treasure. As soon as the galleons were unloaded, and the merchants of Peru, together with the president of Panama arrived, the fair came under consideration. For that purpose the deputies of the several parties repaired on board the admiral's ship, where the prices of the different commodities were settled, in presence of the commander of the galleons and the president of Panama; the former on the part of the Europeans, the latter on that of the Peruvians and other Americans. The estimate was not adjusted according to the intrinsic value of each article, but by its scarcity or plenty; and the ability of the agents consisted in forming their combinations so judiciously, that the cargo imported from Europe should absorb all the treasures that were sent from Lima. It was regarded as a bad market, when goods were found neglected for want of money, or money not laid out for want of goods. In the first of these cases, and in that only, the Spanish merchants were permitted to go and traffic in the South Sea, and in the latter only the Peruvian merchants might make remittances to Spain for the purchase of goods‡.

* Id. *ibid.*

† Ulloa, lib. ii. c. 4.

‡ Ulloa, lib. ii. c. 6.



An Exact MAP of the Provinces of NEW GRENADA, *by* MB***** *from the last Author.*



The prices were no sooner settled than the traffic commenced. This was neither tedious nor difficult : it was conducted with that simplicity and confidence, which accompanies extensive commerce. No bale of goods was ever opened, no chest of treasure was examined : both were received on the credit of the persons to whom they belonged ; and those exchanges were made with so much honesty, that this liberal confidence was never deceived. Chests of gold were found more than once mixed among chests of silver, and in the bales, articles not entered on the invoice ; but all was exactly accounted for on the return of the galleons. There happened, however, one instance of fraud, which might have occasioned a more suspicious mode of dealing. In the year 1654, all the coined silver which was brought from Porto Bello to Europe, was found to have one fifth of alloy. The Spanish merchants, with their usual integrity, sustained the whole loss, and indemnified the foreigners by whom they were employed. The fraud was detected ; and as the treasurer of the mint at Lima, who was publicly burnt for his villany, was found to be the author of it, the reputation of the Peruvian merchants incurred no stain *.

The fair of Porto Bello was limited to forty days, on account of the noxious qualities of the air ; after which term the galleons returned to Spain, by the way of Cuba, with often four millions sterling and upwards, in money and goods. In what manner this rich commerce was ruined we have already seen ; and since the final abolition of the galleons, the trade of Panama and Porto Bello has sunk almost to nothing. These two towns, formerly called the keys of communication between the North and South Sea, between Spain and her most valuable colonies, now only serve as a passage for the negroes that are carried to Peru, and some other inconsiderable branches of decaying traffic.

The Province of Darien is separated from that of Carthagena by a deep gulph to which it gives its name. The eastern coast of this gulph receives the Atrato, a considerable river, by which the Spaniards bring to the smuggling vessels which come thither part of the produce of the mines of Choco. At the distance of about twenty-five leagues from this river, towards the north-west, is situated a tolerable good port, that has preserved the name of *Caledonia*, which the Scots gave to the surrounding district in 1698. They disembarked there twelve hundred men furnish with every thing necessary for establishing a settlement, and built a fort to which they gave the name of *New Edinburgh*. Their design was, to gain the confidence of the natives, whom the Spaniards could not subdue, and with whom they were then at war ; to support them against a people they detested ; to plant a colony on their territory ; to break off the communication between Carthagena and Porto Bello ; to intercept the galleons ; and to unite their forces with those of Jamaica, in order to acquire a decisive superiority in this part of the New World.

That plan, which had nothing chimerical in it, displeased Lewis XIV. who offered to the court of Madrid a fleet to frustrate the attempt. It displeased the

*An Exact MAP of the Provinces of TIERRA FIERMA, DARIEN, CARTHAGENA & NEW GRENADA, by MEB***** from the best Authorities.*



The prices were no sooner settled than the traffic commenced. This was neither tedious nor difficult: it was conducted with that simplicity and confidence, which accompanies extensive commerce. No bale of goods was ever opened, no chest of treasure was examined: both were received on the credit of the persons to whom they belonged; and those exchanges were made with so much honesty, that this liberal confidence was never deceived. Chests of gold were found more than once mixed among chests of silver, and in the bales, articles not entered on the invoice; but all was exactly accounted for on the return of the galleons. There happened, however, one instance of fraud, which might have occasioned a more suspicious mode of dealing. In the year 1654, all the coined silver which was brought from Porto Bello to Europe, was found to have one fifth of alloy. The Spanish merchants, with their usual integrity, sustained the whole loss, and indemnified the foreigners by whom they were employed. The fraud was detected; and as the treasurer of the mint at Lima, who was publicly burnt for his villany, was found to be the author of it, the reputation of the Peruvian merchants incurred no stain*.

The fair of Porto Bello was limited to forty days, on account of the noxious qualities of the air; after which term the galleons returned to Spain, by the way of Cuba, with often four millions sterling and upwards, in money and goods. In what manner this rich commerce was ruined we have already seen; and since the final abolition of the galleons, the trade of Panama and Porto Bello has sunk almost to nothing. These two towns, formerly called the keys of communication between the North and South Sea, between Spain and her most valuable colonies, now only serve as a passage for the negroes that are carried to Peru, and some other inconsiderable branches of decaying traffic.

The Province of Darien is separated from that of Carthagena by a deep gulph to which it gives its name. The eastern coast of this gulph receives the Atrato, a considerable river, by which the Spaniards bring to the smuggling vessels which come thither part of the produce of the mines of Choco. At the distance of about twenty-five leagues from this river, towards the north-west, is situated a tolerable good port, that has preserved the name of *Caledonia*, which the Scots gave to the surrounding district in 1698. They disembarked there twelve hundred men furnish with every thing necessary for establishing a settlement, and built a fort to which they gave the name of *New Edinburgh*. Their design was to gain the confidence of the natives, whom the Spaniards could not subdue, and with whom they were then at war; to support them against a people they detested; to plant a colony on their territory; to break off the communication between Carthagena and Porto Bello; to intercept the galleons; and to unite their forces with those of Jamaica, in order to acquire a decisive superiority in this part of the New World.

That plan, which had nothing chimerical in it, displeased Lewis XIV. who offered to the court of Madrid a fleet to frustrate the attempt. It displeased the

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Dutch, who had reason to be afraid that this new company would one day divide with them the smuggling trade, which they monopolized in those latitudes. It was yet more disagreeable to Spain, which threatened to confiscate the effects of the subjects of Great Britain, who traded in her dominions. It was also alarming to the English, who foresaw that their colonists would abandon their northern settlements, to go and reside in a territory teeming with gold; and that Scotland, growing rich, would emerge from that dependence in which it had hitherto been held by its poverty. This violent and universal opposition determined king William to revoke a permission which his favourites had extorted from him. He likewise prohibited all his colonies in the New World from furnishing either arms, provisions, or ammunition, to a rising settlement, whose ruin would insure the public tranquility. Thus was stifled in its infancy a colony, the greatness of which did not appear to be remote, and which must soon have been very considerable.

On the eastern side of the gulph of Darien begins the government of Carthagena, whose sea coast extends from south-west towards the north for about eighty leagues. It is bounded on the east, for near the same length, by the great river de Magdalena, which hardly leaves it more than forty leagues for its greatest breath; and these, near its northern extremity, are reduced to sixteen or seventeen. On the southern side it borders upon the New Kingdom of Granada. The Magdalena, which has a course of about two hundred leagues, and whose mouth is much frequented by smugglers, serves to bring to Carthagena, the capital of this district, the grain, gold, and other productions of the interior provinces. After several days navigation, the boats enter a narrow channel, which, having been enlarged about the middle of the last century, leads to the sea at a small distance from that city. In those seasons when this channel wants water, and through the negligence of government it will soon be without it in all seasons, the goods are disembarked at three days journey from the capital, to which they are afterwards carried by land. The productions of Popayan and Choco come down the river Cauca, whose source, in common with that of the Magdalena, is in the lake Papas, near the eighth degree of south latitude, and which, about thirty leagues from Carthagena, falls into the last mentioned river, after a course of an hundred and sixty leagues, nearly in the same direction.

This part of America was subjected to the crown of Spain about the year 1532, by Pedro de Heredia, who founded the city of Carthagena, on the extensive and secure bay of the same name. In a situation so advantageous commerce soon began to flourish. As early as 1544, when it was pillaged by some French pirates, Carthagena appears to have been a town of some note. Its prosperity proved again fatal to it in 1585, when it was pillaged and burnt by Sir Francis Drake, that celebrated scourge of the Spanish settlements. It was hardly rebuilt, when in 1697, M. Pointis with a fleet of French privateers, took, ransomed, and afterwards pillaged it. The booty is said to have amounted to upwards of two millions sterling. From that era, it had sufficient time to recruit its strength,

as it was not attacked till 1741, when admiral Vernon found himself obliged to raise the siege of it, though undertaken with an English squadron of twenty-five ships of the line, six fire-ships, two bomb-ketches, and as many land forces as were sufficient to have conquered all South America.

After all the revolutions and hostile attempts to which it has been exposed, Carthagena continues in splendour. It is seated on a peninsula, or sandy island, which is joined to the continent by two artificial necks of land, the broadest of which is not above seventy yards. Its fortifications are regular, and after the modern manner. Nature has placed at a little distance a hill of a middling height, on which the citadel of St. Lazarus is built, that commands the town and harbour. The garrison, in time of peace, consists of ten companies of regulars, containing seventy-seven men each, besides several companies of militia. Carthagena is one of the best built, best laid out, and best fortified cities in the American dominions of Spain. The streets are broad, straight, and well paved. The houses are mostly of stone, and elegant, tho' only one story high. The cathedral, the palaces of the governor and bishop, the town-house, and the custom-house, are magnificent buildings. It is divided into the higher and lower town. The higher town is upon the isthmus itself; and the lower, called also the suburbs, is upon a neck of land which becomes an island at high water, and communicates with the continent by means of a wooden bridge. Both towns are supposed to contain twenty-five thousand inhabitants. Of this number the Spaniards form about a sixth part: the Negroes, Indians, Mulattoes, Mestizos, and an infinite variety of races composed of mixtures from these, make up the remainder*.

This mixture is more common at Carthagena than in any other of the Spanish settlements. A multitude of adventurers without employment, without fortune, and without recommendations, are continually resorting thither. In a country where they are totally unknown, no person can venture to repose any confidence in their services: they are therefore doomed to subsist wretchedly on the alms of the convents, and to lie in the corner of a square, or the portico of a church. If the afflictions which they experience in this state, as is frequently the case, bring some violent disease upon them, they are commonly assisted by the mulatto or free negro women, whose care and kindness they requite by marrying them. Such as have not the fortune to be in a situation sufficiently distressful to excite the compassion of the women, are obliged to retire to some village, and live there by cultivating the ground, which the haughty laziness of the Spanish inhabitants makes them consider as the utmost ignominy. Indolence, in a word, is carried so far at Carthagena, that the opulent of both sexes pass the greater part of the day in swinging in hammocks, which they seldom quit for any time†.

This inactivity is, in some degree, the effect of the climate. The heat is excessive and continual at Carthagena; and the torrents of water, that are incessantly

* Ulloa, lib. i. c. 2, 3, 4.

† Ibid. lib. i. c. 4.

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stantly pouring down from May to November, have this singularity, that they never cool the air, which is sometimes a little moderated in the dry season, by the north-east winds. The night is as hot as the day. An habitual perspiration gives the inhabitants the pale and livid appearance of sick persons. Their actions correspond with their colour. All their motions, languid and sluggish, indicate a relaxed system. This languor manifests itself even in their speech, which is soft and slow, and their words generally broken or interrupted. Notwithstanding all these appearances of sickness and debility, the natives enjoy a good state of health, and often live to a great age*; but strangers from Europe, on their arrival here, are exposed to the most fatal distemper with which humanity is afflicted. This distemper, the nature of which is little known, manifests itself by vomiting, accompanied with so violent a delirium, that the patient must be confined to prevent him from tearing himself in pieces. He often expires in the midst of these agitations, which seldom last above three or four days. Those who have escaped this danger once, have nothing, however, to fear for the future: they enjoy the same state of health as the natives, even though they should not lead the most temperate lives†.

The inhabitants of Carthage and its territory, natives as well as strangers, are subject to another dreadful disorder, namely the leprosy. Some physicians have ascribed this calamity to the too frequent use of pork, without reflecting that it is unknown in other countries of America, where that food is no less common; it must therefore be referred to some latent quality of the climate. In order to prevent the progress of this malady, an hospital has been founded in the country; where all persons supposed to be infected with it are shut up, without distinction of age, sex, or condition. But the benefit of so wise an institution is lost thro' the avarice of the governors; who, without regarding the intention of the establishment, permit the poor to go in and out to beg. Hence the number of lepers never decreases, and is at present so great, that the inclosure of their hospital is of immense extent. It resembles a little town. There every one enjoys a spot of ground, which is marked out for him on his admission. On that he builds a dwelling suitable to his fortune, in which he spends the remainder of his days. These are often many, though wretched; and as it is found that this malady powerfully excites the desire of coition, the infected are permitted to intermarry, by which means it is rendered hereditary‡. Necessity only can justify this indulgence.

Notwithstanding these terrible distempers, and other inconveniencies arising from the climate, Spain hath always shewn a particular predilection for Carthage, on account of its harbour, the safest in her American dominions, and one of the best any where known. It is two leagues in extent, and has a deep and excellent bottom. There is less agitation in it than on the most calm river. The entrance to it formerly was solely by the channel of Bocca Chica, so narrow that only one ship could pass at a time, under the cross batteries of forts erected on

* Ulloa, lib. i. c. 5.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Ut supra.

both sides. The English, in 1741, having destroyed the fortifications that defended this channel, it was shut up by the Spaniards, and an ancient canal opened, which is disposed in such a manner, that it will not be easy for an enemy's squadron to force it. Through this passage all vessels now enter the harbour*.

At the time that the trade of Peru was carried on by the galleons, these ships sailed to Carthagena before they went to Porto Bello, and visited it again on their return. In the first voyage, they deposited the merchandize that was necessary for the interior provinces, and received the price of it in the second. This arrangement displeased the merchants of Lima, who complained, that, on their return from Panama and Porto Bello, they found their country supplied, by the way of Quito, with the same kind of commodities, which they had gone to purchase at such a distance. They petitioned the court, and obtained an order, that Carthagena should not be supplied till after Porto Bello. In consequence of this regulation, the merchants of Carthagena, and the provinces of Santa Fè, Popayan, and Quito, were reduced either to draw what they wanted, at a great expence and hazard, immediately from the fair itself, or to content themselves with the refuse of it. These inconveniencies were so strongly felt that, in 1730, a scheme was devised for the accommodation of all parties. It was agreed, that things should be re-established on their old footing; but that, on notice being given of the arrival of the galleons at Carthagena, all commerce, in regard to European commodities, should cease between Quito and Lima, and the places within their jurisdiction.

This new arrangement, though seemingly equitable, was not productive of the good effects that might have been expected from it. During the former prohibition, trade had taken another direction. The interior provinces had found the means of supplying themselves with European commodities without the assistance of Spain. Nor did the suppressing of the galleons make any change in this matter. The register ships do not take annually at Carthagena above a million of pesos. The contraband trade, which is transacted at an hundred places on this coast, carries away the greater part of the riches of Choco and Popayan, in exchange for foreign manufactures, in which the mother country has no interest. Carthagena however will, in all probability, continue to be a city of great importance, as the wealth now collected there must find or create employment for itself, and may be turned with advantage into some new channel.

The country about Carthagena is so luxuriant, that it is impossible to view without admiration the rich and perpetual verdure of the woods, and the plants which it naturally produces. But these, as already observed, are advantages of which the inhabitants make little use; their innate sloth and indolence not allowing them to cultivate the gifts of nature, which seem to have been dealt out with a lavish hand. The trees here are large and lofty, their variety admirable, and entirely different from those of Europe. The principal of these, in regard to size, are the caobo, the cedar, the maria, and the balsam tree. Of the first

* Ulloa, lib. i. c. 3.

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are made the canoes, and other vessels, for the coast and river trade within the province. The wood of these trees is compact, fragrant, and beautiful. The cedar is of two kinds, white and reddish. The last is most esteemed. The maria and balsam trees, besides the usefulness of their timber, distil those admirable drops called Maria Oil, and Balsam of Tolu; so named from a village, in the neighbourhood of which it is produced in the greatest quantity, and of peculiar excellency*.

Among the variety of vegetables, which grow under the shade of trees, and along the sunny borders of the woods, the most common is the *sensitive plant*; on touching one of the leaves of which, all those on the same branch immediately close against each other. After a short interval, they begin gradually to open, and separate from one another, till they are again perfectly expanded. This plant is about a foot and an half, or two feet in height, with a slender stem, and the branches proportionally weak and tender. The leaves are long, and stand so close together, that all those on one branch appear as a single leaf, four or five inches in length, and ten lines in breadth; which, being subdivided into its distinct parts, forms in each of them the true leaf, about four or five lines in length, and not quite one in breadth. On touching one of these small leaves, they all instantly quit their horizontal position, and fly into a perpendicular direction, closing their inward superficies; so that those which, before this sensitive motion, made two leaves, now make but one. The vulgar name of this plant at Carthagera is too gross to be mentioned. By the better sort of people it is more decently called *la vergonzosa*, the bashful; or, *la doncella*, the maiden†.

The province of Carthagera produces sugar, cotton, and cacao, all in the greatest perfection, but neither in such quantity as to become an article of exportation. What chiefly strikes the eye of a stranger is the vast variety of pompous trees and plants, in a manner emulating each other, through the whole year, in producing the most beautiful and delicious fruits; some introduced from Europe, others peculiar to the country. Among the latter the preference doubtless belongs to the pine-apple, whose beauty, smell, and taste, have acquired it the appellation of *the queen of fruits*. The ananas or pine-apple, so called from its similarity to the cones of the European pine-tree, is produced by a plant nearly resembling the aloe; except that the leaves of the ananas are longer, but not so thick, and most of them stand near the ground in an horizontal position; but as they approach nearer the fruit, they diminish in length, and become less expanded. This plant seldom grows to above three feet in height, and terminates in a flower, like the lily in form, but of so elegant a crimson colour as even to dazzle the eye. The pine-apple makes its first appearance in the centre of the flower, about the size of a nut; and as this increases, the lustre of the flower fades, and the leaves expand themselves to make room for it, and secure it, both as a bate and ornament. On the top of the apple itself, is a crown or tuft of leaves, like those of the plant, and of a very lively green. This

* Ulloa, lib. c. 6.

† Id. ibid.

crown grows in proportion with the fruit, till both have attained their utmost magnitude; and hitherto they differ very little in colour: but as soon as the crown ceases to grow, the fruit begins to ripen, and its green changes to a bright straw-colour. During this gradual alteration of colour, the fruit exhales such abundant fragrance as makes it known, though concealed from sight. While the pine-apple continues to increase in size, it shoots forth on all sides little thorns; but these, as it approaches towards maturity, dry and soften, so that the fruit is gathered without the least inconveniency*.

The singularities which concentrate in this rare production, this queen of the vegetable kingdom, cannot fail to strike a contemplative mind with admiration. The crown, which was to it a kind of apex, while growing in the woods, becomes itself, when sown, a new plant, and the stem, after the fruit is cut, dies away as if satisfied with having answered the intention of nature in such a rich produce; but the roots shoot forth fresh stalks, for the farther increase of so valuable a fruit†. The taste of the pine-apple, and the manner of eating it, are too well known to require a particular description. Its general length, in this country, is from five to seven inches, and the diameter near its base from three to four, diminishing regularly as it approaches to its apex. The rind infused in water, after a proper fermentation, produces a very cooling liquor, and still retains all the qualities of the fruit‡.

Between the great river Magdalena and Cape de Vela, lie the provinces of Santa Martha and Rio de la Hacha, which differ in nothing essentially from the territory of Carthagena, except in the healthfulness of their climate, the air being cooler and more pure. The province contiguous to these on the east, was first visited by Alonso de Ojeda, in the year 1499; and the Spaniards on landing there, having observed some huts of an Indian village built upon piles, in order to raise them above the stagnated water which covered the plain, were led to bestow upon it the name of Venezuela, or little Venice, by their usual propensity to find a resemblance between what they discovered in America and the objects that were familiar to them in Europe. They made some attempts to settle there, but with little success. The final reduction of the province was accomplished by means very different from those to which Spain is indebted for her other acquisitions in the New World.

The ambition of Charles V. often engaged him in operations of such variety and extent, that his revenues were not sufficient to defray the expence of carrying them into execution. Among other expedients for supplying the deficiency of his funds, he had borrowed large sums from the Vellars of Augsburg, the most opulent merchants at that time in Europe. In way of retribution for these, or in hopes perhaps of obtaining a new loan, he bestowed upon them the province of Venezuela, to be held as an hereditary fief of the crown of Castile, on condition that, within a limited time, they should make themselves masters of the country, and establish a colony there. Under the direction of such persons it might have

* Ulloa, lib. i. c. 8.

† *Ibid.*‡ *Ut supra.*

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been expected that a settlement would have been established on maxims very different from those of the Spaniards, and better calculated to encourage such useful industry, as they might have known to be the only certain source of prosperity and opulence. But unfortunately, they committed the execution of their plan to some of those foldiers of fortune with which Germany abounded in the sixteenth century. These adventurers, impatient to amass riches, that they might speedily abandon a station which they found to be very uncomfortable, instead of planting a colony that might have cultivated and improved the country, wandered from district to district in search of mines, plundering the natives with unfeeling rapacity, or oppressing them by the imposition of intolerable tasks. In the course of a few years, their avarice and exactions, in comparison with which those of the Spaniards were moderate, desolated the province so completely that it could hardly afford them subsistence; and the Vellers relinquished a property, from which the atrocious conduct of their agents left them no hope of ever deriving any advantage*.

When the wretched remainder of the Germans deserted Venezuela, the Spaniards again took possession of it; but unfortunately the scenes of horror, which the Germans had exhibited, were renewed by Carvajal, who was appointed to the government of this unhappy country. His barbarities rendered the depopulation so complete, that as early as 1550, a great number of negroes were imported from Africa, on whom the hopes of an unbounded prosperity were founded. But the habit of tyranny made the Spaniards treat these slaves with so much severity that they revolted. Their rebellion was assigned as a reason for massacring all the males; and this province once more became a desert, in which the ashes of negroes, Spaniards, Indians, and Germans, the oppressors and the oppressed, were intermingled. Nor has Venezuela ever yet emerged from that state of languor and unproductive obscurity, which has so long involved the greater part of the provinces that lie between the Magdalena and the Orinoco, though their extent, as well as the excellence and variety of their soil might have invited the mother country to derive several very valuable productions from them.

From this reproach must be exempted the province of Caraccas, in the centre of that extensive coast, which furnishes an article of very considerable importance in the trade of Spain. Among the new tastes which the people of Europe have acquired, in consequence of their intercourse with the natives of those countries which they conquered in America, that for chocolate is one of the most universal. The use of this liquor, made with a paste formed of the nut, or almond of the cacao-tree, compounded with various ingredients, the Spaniards first learned of the Mexicans; and it has appeared to them, and to other European nations, so palatable, so nourishing, and so wholesome, that it has become an article in commerce of great value. The cacao tree is cultivated successfully in several districts of America, and even grows spontaneously in

* Oviedo, *Hist. de Venezuela*. Robertson, *Hist. Amer.* Book vii.

others, but it succeeds no where so well, nor are the nuts any where of so good a quality, as those produced in the rich plains of Caraccas.

This tree, which is generally from twelve to twenty feet high, is propagated from seeds which are sown at certain distances. When it begins to shoot, it divides into three, four, five, or six stems, according to the vigour of the root. In proportion as it grows, its branches, which are always very distant from each other, bend towards the earth. The length of the leaf is between four and six inches, and its breadth three or four: it is smooth, soft, and terminates in a point, like that of the orange-tree, but is of a less vivid green. From the stem, as well as the branches, grow the pods which contain the cacao. The first appearance is a white blossom, not very large, whose pistil contains the embryo of the pod. This pod, which incloses between twenty and thirty small almonds, grows to the length of six or seven inches, and four or five in width, resembling a cucumber in shape, and striated in a longitudinal direction, but deeper than the cucumber. It is green during its growth, but when arrived at full perfection, it gradually changes to yellow. The yellowness of the pod indicates that the cacao begins to feed on its substance, to acquire a greater consistence, and that the seeds begin to fill; the colour gradually fading till that process is fully completed, when the dark brown colour of the husk, into which the yellow has deviated, indicates that it is proper time to gather it. The thickness of the husk is now about two lines, and each seed or almond is found inclosed in one of the compartments, formed by the traverse membranes of the pod. After gathering, the fruit is opened, and the seeds taken out and dried*.

The cacao tree, which begins to reward the labour of the planter at the end of two or three years, requires a moist soil. If it wants water, it produces no fruit, withers and dies. A shade to defend it from the vertical rays of the sun, is no less necessary. Accordingly it is always placed near other larger trees, under whose shelter it may flourish. The farther culture which it requires is neither laborious nor expensive. It is sufficient to extirpate the surrounding weeds, which would deprive it of its nourishment. The plantations are called Cacao-Walks, and yield two crops in a year, equal in quantity and quality†.

In consequence of the acknowledged superiority in the quality of the cacao of Caraccas, and the communication of this province with the Atlantic, which facilitates the conveyance to Europe, the culture of cacao here is more extensive than in any district of America. But the Dutch, by the vicinity of their settlements in the small islands of Curazoa and Buen-Ayre, to the coast of Caraccas, gradually ingrossed the greatest part of the cacao trade. The traffic with the mother-country for this valuable commodity ceased almost entirely; and such was the supine negligence of the Spaniards, or the defects in their commercial regulations, that they were obliged to receive from the hands of foreigners this production of their own colonies, and which they use more than any

* Ulloa, lib. iv. c. 8.

† Id. *ibid.*

people in Europe, at an exorbitant price. In order to remedy an evil, no less disgraceful than pernicious to his subjects, Philip V. granted to a body of merchants, in the year 1728, an exclusive right to the commerce with Caraccas, and the neighbouring province of Cumana, on condition of their employing at their own expence, a sufficient number of armed vessels to clear the coast of interlopers.

This society, distinguished sometimes by the name of the company of Guipuscoa, from the province of Spain in which it is established, and sometimes by that of the company of Caraccas, has carried on its operations with such vigour and success, that Spain has recovered an important branch of commerce, which she had suffered to be wrested from her, and is plentifully supplied with an article of extensive consumption at a moderate price. Not only the parent-state, but the colony of Caraccas has derived great advantages from this institution; for although, at the first view, it may appear to be one of those monopolies, whose tendency is to check the spirit of industry, instead of calling it forth to new exertions, it has been prevented from operating in this manner by several salutary regulations, framed upon foresight of such bad effects, and on purpose to obviate them. The planters of Caraccas are not left to depend entirely on the company, either for the importation of European commodities, or the sale of their productions. The inhabitants of the Canary islands have the privilege of sending thither annually a register ship of considerable burden; and from Vera Cruz in New Spain, a free trade is permitted in every port comprehended in the charter of the company. In consequence of this, there is such a competition, that, both with respect to what the two colonies purchase and what they sell, the price seems to be fixed at its natural and equitable rate.

The increase of culture, population, and of live stock, has accordingly been very considerable in the province of Caraccas, since the establishment of the company. It is computed that the plantations of cacao produce annually more than one hundred thousand fanegas, of an hundred and ten pounds each. Of these the new kingdom of Granada consumes twenty thousand, New Spain a little more, the Canaries a small cargo, and Europe from fifty to sixty thousand. The fanega of cacao sells in Spain for forty pesos, or about nine pounds sterling †.

Caraccas has two fortified towns on the coast, namely Puerto Cabelo and La Guayra. The first is towards the western extremity of the province, near to Golfo Trieste; the second is situated twenty-seven leagues to the east of this, between Cape Blanco and Cape Codera, and though it has only an open road, is the chief place for the trade of the Guipuscoa company. The town is seated at the foot of a very high mountain, and the narrow shore along which it extends, is defended by an entrenchment well furnished with artillery, and commanded by two forts on the declivity of the mountain. Admiral Knowles made an un-

* Notic. de Real Compan. de Caraccas.

† Campomanes.

successful attack in 1743, on La Guayra and Puerto Cabelo; a misfortune no less surprising than the attempt was unimportant, as these towns are only peopled with sailors and factors, the rich inhabitants residing chiefly at Leon, the capital of the province. Leon is situated six leagues more to the south, on the other side of the mountains. The valley in which it stands is a savanna or meadow, well watered and very healthy, about three leagues long, and one broad in the middle. This valley is bordered on the east by mountains of an immense height; so that those on the west and south, though very high, appear comparatively moderate. The city is near a mile long: the houses are handsome, and elegantly ornamented; the streets regular, straight, and broad, cutting each other at right angles, and terminating at a magnificent square in the center. The number of inhabitants are about four or five thousand, most of them owners of the plantations of cacao, which are cultivated by twelve or thirteen thousand negroes.

Beyond the province of Caraccas lie those of Cumana and Paria, both but little cultivated, and thinly peopled; though Cumana, which, as already observed, is included in the charter of the Guipuscoa Company, exports some tobacco and hides. From these provinces, which border on the Orinoco, we are naturally led in ascending its stream, to the New Kingdom of Granada. This, which is entirely an inland country, and of vast extent, was subjected to the crown of Spain about the year 1536, by Sebastian de Benalcazar and Gonzalo Ximenes de Quesada, two of the bravest and most accomplished officers employed in the conquest of America. The former, who commanded at that time in Quito, attacked it from the south; the latter made his invasions from Santa Martha, on the north. As the original inhabitants of this region were farther advanced in improvement, than any people in America except the Mexicans and Peruvians, they defended themselves with great resolution and good conduct. The abilities of Benalcazar and Quesada however surmounted all opposition, though not without encountering many dangers, and at last reduced the country to the form of a Spanish province*. But before we proceed to speak of it as such, a few words will be necessary in regard to its ancient state.

In the territory of Bogota, where Santa Fè, the capital of the New Kingdom of Granada is situated, there was settled a nation, that, at the time of the conquest, had made considerable progress in the various arts of life. They subsisted chiefly by agriculture: the idea of property was introduced among them; and its rights were secured by laws, handed down by tradition, and observed with great care. They lived in large towns; they were clothed in a decent manner; and their houses might be termed commodious, when compared with those of the rude people around them. The effects of this uncommon civilization were conspicuous: government had assumed a regular form; a jurisdiction was established, which took cognizance of different crimes, and punished them with rigour; a distinction of ranks was known; and the lord of Bogota, to whom the Spaniards gave the title of king, and who merited that

* Herrera, dec. IV. lib. iii. c. 3, 4.

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name on account of his splendour as well as power, reigned with absolute authority. He was attended by officers of various conditions : he never appeared in public without a numerous retinue : he was carried in a sort of palanquin with much pomp, and harbingers went before him to sweep the road, and strew it with flowers. This magnificence was supported by presents or taxes received from his subjects, to whom their prince was such an object of veneration, that none presumed to look him directly in the face, or ever approached him but with an averted countenance *. The people of Tunja, a neighbouring district, were scarcely less civilized.

The new kingdom of Granada is so far elevated above the level of the sea, that though it approaches almost to the equator, the climate is remarkably temperate. The fertility of its vallies is not inferior to the richest districts in America, and its higher grounds yield gold and precious stones of various kinds. It is not by digging into the bowels of the earth that this gold is found ; it is mingled with the soil near the surface, and separated by repeated washing with water, in the manner already described. This operation is carried on wholly by negro slaves ; for although the chill subterraneous air has been found by experience to be so fatal to them, that they cannot be employed in the deep silver mines, they are more capable of performing the other species of labour than the Indians : and as the natives in the new kingdom of Granada, in consequence of this practice, are exempt from that service which has wasted their race so remarkably in other parts of America, it is very populous.

Some districts yield gold in vast profusion. It is found in *pepitas*, or grains, which manifest the abundance in which it is produced. On a rising ground near Pampeluna, single labourers have collected in a day what was equal in value to a thousand pesos †. A late governor of Santa Fè brought with him to Spain a lump of virgin gold, estimated to be worth seven hundred and forty pounds sterling ‡. But without founding any calculation upon what is rare and extraordinary, or pretending to mention any sum, we may safely affirm that the value of the gold usually collected in this country, particularly in the provinces of Popayan and Choco, is of considerable amount. Its towns are populous and flourishing || ; the number of inhabitants in almost every part of the country daily increases ; and cultivation and industry, of various kinds, begin to be encouraged, and to prosper. A considerable trade is carried on with Carthagena ; the produce of the mines, and other commodities, particularly corn, being conveyed down the great river Magdalena to that city, though a much greater quantity of gold, as already observed, is dispersed in the contraband trade on the coast. The new kingdom of Granada has also a communication with the Atlantic by the river Orinco ; but as the country which stretches along its banks towards the east

* Herrera, dec. iv. lib. iii. cap. 4. Piedrahita, Hist. del Neuv. Reyn. de Granad.

† Robertson, Hist. Amer. b. vii. from a manuscript in his possession.

‡ Id. ibid.

|| As no account of these towns has been published by any late traveller, the author cannot pretend to describe them. They were not visited by Ulloa.

is little known, and imperfectly occupied by the Spaniards, almost no advantage is derived from this means of intercourse.

The province of Quito, which has in some measure been incorporated with the New Kingdom of Granada, by being comprehended within the government of Santa Fè, forms the best known and most agreeable part of it. Nothing, for example, can be compared to the valley formed between the double chain of the Cordeleras, which is all that can properly be said to be peopled, and actually subject to the Spanish government. In this valley, which extends from the jurisdiction of the town of St. Miguel de Ibarra to that of Loxa, though in the centre of the torrid zone, and even immediately under the equator, all the beauties of spring are incessantly enjoyed. The mildness of the air, the equality of day and night, yield a thousand delights in a country which the sun surrounds with a girdle of fire. It is preferred to the climate of the temperate zones, where the change of the seasons produces sensations too opposite not to be inconvenient, from that very inequality. Nature has combined a variety of circumstances to produce this happy medium. The principal of these are, the elevation of the globe in this summit of its sphere; the vicinity of mountains of immense height, always covered with snow; and cooling winds, which blow continually, but never with violence, and refresh the country the whole year, by abating the force of the perpendicular rays of the sun *.

This description is more particularly applicable to the territory of the city of Quito, which, were so many advantages not counterbalanced by some inconveniencies, might be considered as the most agreeable spot on the face of the earth. A bright sun, a serene and clear sky, are generally there seen till one or two in the afternoon; but then the vapours begin to arise, and the heavens are involved in clouds, which are suddenly changed into storms. The whole atmosphere is illuminated, and seems to be set on fire by lightning, while the thunder makes the mountains resound, and even tremble to their base. The clouds discharge themselves in such torrents of rain that the level country resembles a lake, and the ridges between the eminences so many rivers. That dreadful scene commonly continues till near sun-set, when the sky clears up, and nature again puts on the beautiful appearance of the morning †. This variation, however, is by no means regular and universal: four, five, six, or even eight fine days, often succeed each other without interruption ‡.

The fertility of the soil is answerable to the mildness of the climate. The moisture, and the action of the sun being continual, and always sufficient to unfold and strengthen the shoots, the agreeable picture of the three most beautiful seasons of the year is constantly presented to the eye. As soon as the verdure of the fields is seen to fade, fresh verdure springs up; and while some flowers are losing their beauty, others are blowing to continue the enameled prospect. When the fruits have attained their maturity, and the leaves begin to change their colour, fresh leaves, blossoms, and fruits, are seen in their proper gradations on

* Ulloa, lib. v. c. 6.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Ut supra.

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the same tree. This progressive fertility, incessantly renewed, is no less remarkable in the corn. At one view may be seen the new sown seed springing up; some more advanced in the blade; some spiked with ears; some turning yellow, and some under the reaper's sickle. The whole year is spent in a perpetual round of sowing and reaping, within the compass of the same landscape. That constant variety arises from the different situations of the ground; composed of mountains, eminences, plains, and vallies*.

This extraordinary fecundity in the soil is naturally productive of excellent fruits, corn, cattle, and plenty of every kind. The beef, mutton, veal, and pork of Quito, are not inferior to those of Europe, and remarkably cheap. The only production of which there is any scarcity here is pulse, the deficiency in which is amply supplied by roots. All kinds of European fruits are here cultivated with the greatest success; and the country yields, in the highest perfection, others peculiar to the New World, or at least to the torrid zone, which deserve a particular description. The chief of these are the Chirimoya, Aguacate, and Granadilla.

The chirimoya is universally allowed to be the most delicious fruit known in any quarter of the globe. Its dimensions are various, being from one to five inches in diameter. Its figure is imperfectly round, being flattened towards the stalk, where an excrescence is formed, but all the other parts are nearly circular. It is covered with a thin soft shell, which adheres so closely to the pulp as not to be separated without a knife. The outward coat, during its growth, is of a dark green, but on attaining its full maturity it becomes somewhat lighter. This coat is variegated with prominent veins, forming a kind of net-work all over it. The pulp is white, intermixed with several almost imperceptible fibres, concentrating in the core, which extends from the hollow of the excrescence to the opposite side. As they have their origin near the former, so in that part they are larger and more distinct. The flesh contains a great quantity of juice, resembling honey. Its taste is sweet, mixed with a gentle acid, and of a most exquisite flavour. The seeds are formed in several parts of the flesh, and are about seven lines in length, and three or four in breadth. They are also somewhat flat, and situated longitudinally.

The tree that bears this fruit is high and tufted, full of elliptical leaves, terminating in a point; and the stem is large and round, but with some inequalities. The length of the leaf is about three inches and an half, and the breadth two, or two and an half: but the most remarkable circumstance relative to this tree is, that it every year sheds and renews its leaves. The blossom, in which is the embryo of the fruit, differs very little from the leaves in colour, which is a darkish green; but when arrived at its full maturity, it is of a yellowish green. It resembles a caper in figure, though somewhat larger, and is composed of four petals. It is far from being beautiful; but that deficiency is abundantly made up by its incomparable fragrance. This tree is observed to be very parsimonious of its

* Ulloa, lib. v. c. 7.

blossoms; producing only such as would ripen into fruit, did not the extravagant passion of the ladies induce them to purchase those blossoms at any price, on account of the excellence of their perfume *.

The aguacate may also be classed among the choicest fruits of this country. Its figure in some measure resembles that calabash of which snuff-boxes are made; that is to say, the lower part is round, and tapers away gradually towards the stalk, whence to its base, the length is generally between three and five inches. It is covered with a very thin glossy smooth shell, which when the fruit is thoroughly ripe, is detached from the pulp. The colour, both during its growth, and when arrived at perfection, is green, but turns somewhat pale as it ripens. The pulp is solid, but yields to the pressure of the finger; the colour, white tinged with green, and the taste so simple, as to require salt to give it an agreeable relish. The tree that produces this fruit is lofty and full of branches; and the leaf, both in dimensions and figure, resembles that of the chimoya †.

The granadilla resembles a hen's egg in shape, though larger. The outside of the shell is smooth and glossy, and of a faint carnation colour. The inside is white and soft. This shell, which is about a line and an half in thickness, and pretty hard, contains a viscous and liquid substance, full of very small and delicate grains, less hard than those of the pomegranate. This medullary substance is separated from the shell by an extremely fine and transparent membrane. The fruit is of a delightful sweetness, blended with acidity; very cordial and refreshing, and so wholesome that there is no danger in indulging the appetite ‡. The granadilla is not the produce of a tree, but of a plant, the blossom of which is the celebrated passion flower, so much admired in Europe, and stiled the pride of the garden. This plant bears no fruit in England, by reason of the coldness of the climate.

The city of Quito is built on the declivity of the famous mountain of Pichincha, among the clefts and ridges which form the eminences of the Cordeleras. Some of these clefts are of a considerable depth, and run quite through the city, so that great part of the buildings stand upon arches. This situation renders the streets extremely irregular and uneven, some being on the ascents, and others on the summits of the ridges. Quito, with regard to magnitude, may be compared to a city of the second order in Europe. Near it are two spacious plains: one on the south called Turu-bamba, three leagues in length; the other on the north, termed Inna-quito, about two leagues in length. Both are interspersed with villas and cultivated fields, which greatly add to the beauty of the prospect from the city; and that is still farther heightened by the lively verdure of the plains and neighbouring hills, always enameled with flowers. This delightful scene is diversified by flocks of sheep on the eminences, and large droves of cattle in the low grounds, where the herbage is so luxuriant as to afford them a constant supply, without seeming ever to experience any decrease. These two plains contract as they approach the city, and at their junction form a neck of

* Ulloa, lib. v. c. 7.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Ut supra.

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land, covered with those eminences on which part of Quito stands. It may appear strange that a situation so inconvenient should be chosen, when two such beautiful plains were contiguous; but the first founders appear to have had less regard for conveniency and beauty than for preserving the memory of their conquest, by building on the site of the ancient capital of the Indians, who probably selected such a spot from its being better adapted to defence.

The principal square in Quito is very spacious, and has an elegant fountain in the middle. On one side stands the cathedral, on the opposite the episcopal palace; the third is occupied by the town-house, and the fourth by the palace of the audience, which is in a ruinous condition. The four streets, which terminate at the angles of the square are straight, broad, and handsome; but at the distance of three or four hundred yards, begin the troublesome declivities. These deprive the inhabitants of the use of coaches, or any other wheel-carriages. Persons of rank, however, to distinguish themselves, are attended by a servant carrying an umbrella, and the ladies are carried in sedans. Except the four streets above mentioned, all the rest are crooked, and destitute of symmetry or beauty.

Besides the great square, Quito has two others of considerable extent, and several smaller ones. In these the convents are chiefly situated, and make an elegant appearance, the fronts and portals being adorned with all the embellishments of architecture; particularly the convent of the Franciscans, which is built wholly of free-stone, and equal to the most admired buildings in Europe. The principal houses are large, and some of them have spacious and well contrived apartments, but the doors and windows are intolerably small; a mode of building very extraordinary in a warm climate, and which seems to have owed its origin to a blind imitation of the ancient practice of the Indians. The houses are only one story high, and have generally a balcony towards the street. The common materials for building are unburnt bricks, cemented together with a species of mortar called *sangagua*, which makes them last a long time*.

Quito contains between fifty and sixty thousand inhabitants, of all ages and sexes, casts, colours, and conditions. Of these the Spaniards, or whites form about a sixth part; the Indians, a third; the Mestizos, another third; and the casts, consisting of various races composed of a mixture from Spaniards, Indians, and negroes, a sixth. If the Spaniards, who here as elsewhere, engross all public offices, are the most eminent among those classes for riches, rank, and power, they are also comparatively the most poor and miserable; for they decline the prosecution of any mechanical employment, considering it as a disgrace to that quality on which they so highly value themselves — on not being black, brown, or of a copper colour! The Mestizos, whose pride is regulated by prudence, readily apply themselves to arts and trades, but chose those of the highest repute, as painting, sculpture, and the like, leaving the meaner sort to the Indians. Many of the Mestizos are highly ingenious; but both they and

the Indians are remarkably indolent, spending whole days in loitering about the streets instead of following their particular callings. From this idleness, which is in some measure occasioned by the cheapness of provisions, result gaming, drunkenness, and debauchery of every species*; the manners of the inhabitants of Quito being more thoroughly corrupted than those in any other of the Spanish colonies, though many of them are distinguished by the most enormous excesses in all kinds of sensuality.

To this licentiousness Spain imputes the loss of those gold and silver mines that were opened here at the time of the conquest, and the neglect of such as have been since discovered. This province, it has been asserted, might apply to that kind of industry with so much the more success, as it is better peopled with Indians and Spaniards than any other province in South America, and derives from itself abundance of excellent provisions; which, in other parts, where mines are worked, must be brought from a great distance, and purchased at an enormous price. But the Spaniards born at Quito, as well as such as are sent from Spain to take upon themselves the government of it, find these reproaches ill founded. Their general opinion is, That the mines of this province are not sufficiently rich to defray the charge of working them. A foreigner cannot pretend to decide this point; but if we reflect on the ardour which the Spaniards have always manifested for that species of wealth, which is earned without any labour on their part, and costs them little besides the blood of the natives, we may venture to conclude, that nothing but an entire impossibility, confirmed by repeated experience, could determine this colony to deny itself the pursuit of its natural inclinations, accompanied with the earnest solicitations of the mother-country.

The province of Quito has endeavoured to make up the deficiency of its mines by the produce of its manufactures. A prodigious quantity of hats, common cloths, light stuffs, and baize is made here; particularly in the districts of Riobamba, Cuenza, and Loxa, the capitals of which are considerable towns. Exclusive of its own consumption, this province exported annually for a long time, manufactures to the amount of a million of pesos. By means of these it was enabled to pay for its wines, brandies, and oils, which it was never permitted to draw from its own territory; for the dried and salted fish, which was brought from the coasts; for the soap which is made at Truxillo (a town on the sea coast of Peru) from the fat of goats, which have exceedingly multiplied there; for the iron used in all its works of agriculture, and for all those luxuries with which it was supplied from the old world. But this traffic has of late diminished more than one half. At all times the principal inhabitants of the province kept up the pride of dressing in European cloth, known throughout all Spanish America by the name of the cloth of Castile. This taste is become general, since the register ships have been substituted in place of the galleons. The facility of being continually supplied with these cloths, and of getting

* Ulloa, lib. v. c. 5.

them at a lower price than formerly, has ruined the manufactures of Quito, which is likely to be reduced to extreme wretchedness.

This province will never emerge from its poverty by its connexions with Spain, to which it furnishes nothing but Jesuits Bark. It was originally believed that the tree which yields the bark was found only in the territory of Loxa; but it has been lately discovered in equal perfection, in the neighbourhood of Riobamba, Cuenza, and some other places in the province of Quito, from which the exportation is very considerable; the inhabitants being diligent in distinguishing the good from the bad, and also intelligent in the use of that admirable specific. They have not paid equal attention to an object of no less importance; namely, the culture of cochineal, which is found in the territory of Loxa, equal to that of New Spain. It is only cultivated in such quantity as to supply the manufactures of Loxa and Cuenza; which owe to that circumstance, especially their carpets, a superiority that procures them a ready sale*. If the people of Quito can ever be roused so far from their inactivity as to pursue this species of industry, they will open to themselves a new commerce with Europe, which they may enlarge, if they please, by the culture of cinnamon.

Towards the eastern side of the Cordelera, are situated the countries of Quixos and Macas, which were subdued in 1559, by Ramirez Davalos, and annexed to the province of Quito. These colonies, which are so thinly peopled as scarce to deserve the name of settlements, are of no use to the mother-country. Both, however, produce the canela or cinnamon tree, the bark of which is in common use both in Peru and the province of Quito. This cinnamon is inferior in quality to that of the East-Indies, but in every other particular resembles it. The smell is nearly the same; the colour is somewhat browner: but the most essential difference lies in the taste, that of Quixos being more pungent. The leaf is entirely similar, and has all the delicate smell of the bark: the flower and seed surpass even those of the East; the former in particular being of incomparable fragrance, from the great abundance of aromatic parts it contains. There is good reason therefore to believe, that this tree duly cultivated, might here yield cinnamon equal in every respect to that of the island of Ceylon†.

The district which on the south limits the jurisdiction of the audience of Quitô, and follows next to Macas, is that of Jean Bracamoros, which was discovered and subdued in 1538, by Pedro de Vargara. This country was at first in high repute on account of its rich mines; but the wealth arising from these was soon brought to a period by the revolt of the Indians, whom the oppressions of the Spaniards drove to despair, and who have ever since maintained their independency. The district of Jean Bracamoros, however, is still famous for its tobacco, the cultivation of which is the chief employment of the inhabitants. It is

* Ulloa, lib. vi. c. 4.

† Ulloa, lib. vi. c. 4. This opinion is confirmed by a cinnamon-tree planted either by accident or design near the city of Macas, the bark of which both in taste and fragrance, is thought, to exceed that of the East. Id. *ibid.*

exported to Peru, all over the Province of Quito, and to the kingdom of Chili, where it is in great request, no other being used in smoking *. In this country is found the Maca, a very singular snake, which the Indians distinguish by the name of Curi-mullinvo; it having a shining spotted skin, like that of the tiger, and curi in the Indian language signifies gold. It is wholly covered with scales, and makes a frightful appearance. Its head is out of all proportion to the size of its body: it has two rows of teeth, and fangs like those of a large dog. The wild Indians, as an ostentatious mark of their ferocity, and to give them a more terrible appearance, paint on their targets the figure of this snake, the bite of which is incurable, and which never lets go its hold, when it has seized either on man or beast; a characteristic which the Indians would also intimate by their device †.

Contiguous to the districts of Quixos and Jean Bracamoros lies that of Maynas, which forms the eastern boundary of the province of Quito. In this district are the sources of those rivers, which, after traversing a vast extent of country, form, by their conflux, the Maragnon or great river of the Amazons. The stream of the Maragnon, and of many other rivers, which pay it the tribute of their waters, environ and pervade the territory of Maynas. The limits of this territory, towards the north and south, are little known, being far extended among the possessions of the wild Indians. Towards the east it joins the dominions of the Portuguese, from which it is divided by the famous line of demarcation, that separates the claims of the crown of Spain from those of Portugal.

The district of Maynas has nothing to entitle it to attention as a Spanish colony, but its connexion with the sources of the Maragnon offers to our contemplation a noble object of human curiosity; the rise and progressive course of the greatest river on our globe, in comparison with which the Nile and the Ganges are but inconsiderable streams.

Among the vast number of roots by which nourishment is conveyed to a stately tree, it is difficult, from the great length of some, and the magnitude of others, to ascertain precisely that from which the plant originally sprung. A like difficulty occurs in tracing the fountain of the Maragnon. The sources by which this river is increased are so numerous, that properly every stream that issues from the eastern side of the Andes may be reckoned among the number: for all the streams that run eastward from this chain of mountains, widening as they advance from their source, by the conflux of others, form those mighty rivers that afterwards unite in the Maragnon; and though some traverse a larger distance from their source, yet others, which rise nearer, by receiving in their short course, a greater supply of waters, may have an equal claim to be called the principal source. But the opinion most generally received concerning the remote source of the Maragnon, is that which places it in the lake of Lauricocha, near the city of Ganuco, in the eleventh degree of south latitude; whence it directs its

* Ulloa, lib. vi. c. 4.

† Id. *ibid.*

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course south almost to the twelfth degree, and forming insensibly a circuit, flows eastward through the country of Juaxa; where, after being precipitated from the east side of the Andes, it proceeds northward, and leaving the jurisdictions of Mayabamba and Chacha-poyas, it continues its course to the city of Jean Bracamoros: thence, by a second circuit, it runs towards the east in a continual direction, till it falls into the ocean, after a course of at least eleven hundred leagues, from Lauricocha, including all its circuits and windings.

The stream that issues from Lauricocha is not, however, the only one flowing from those parts that contributes to swell the Maragnon. South of that lake, not far from Alangara, is the source of the river that passes through Guamanga; and in the jurisdictions of Vilcas and Andaguaylas are two others, which, after running some time separately, unite their streams, and discharge themselves into the river issuing from the lake of Lauricocha. Another rises in the province of Chimbi-Vilcas. Still farther to the south is the river Apurimac, which, directing its course to the northward, passes through the country of Cuzco, not far from Lima-Tambo; and after being joined by others, falls into the Maragnon about an hundred and twenty leagues east of the junction of the latter with the river St. Jago: but here it is of such a width and depth, as to leave a doubt, whether it pours itself into the Maragnon, or the Maragnon pays tribute to the Ucayale, as the river Apurimac is called in those parts, since at their conflux, the impetuosity of the latter forces the former to alter the straight direction of its course, and form a curve.

Eastward of Ucayale, the Maragnon receives the Yabari, and afterwards four other rivers; namely, the Yutay, Yurua, Tefe, and Coari, all running from the south, where they have their source nearly in the same Cordeleras as that of the Ucayale, but the countries through which the latter passes being inhabited by wild Indians, and consequently but little known to the Spaniards, its course before its junction with the Maragnon, cannot be ascertained. Beyond the river Coari eastward, the Cuchibara, also called the Purus, joins the Maragnon, and afterwards the Madera, one of the largest rivers that unite their waters with it. In 1741 the Portuguese sailed up the Madera, till they found themselves not far from Santa Cruz de la Sierra, between the seventeenth and eighteenth degree of south latitude. From this river downwards the Maragnon is known to the Portuguese by the name of the River of the Amazons: upwards they give it the name of the River of Solimoes. Within a small distance from the influx of the Madera, follows the river of Topayas, likewise very considerable, which has its source among the mines of Brazil. After these, the Maragnon is farther joined by the rivers Zingu, dos Bocas, Tocantines, and Muju, all issuing from the mines and mountains of Brazil; and on the eastern shore of the latter, stands the city of Gran Para*.

Having thus given an account of the most distant branches of the Maragnon, and of the principal ones that join it from the south, we shall proceed to those issuing from the Cordeleras, the sources of which are nearer, and also such as

* Voyage de la Condamine. Ulloa, lib. vi. c. 5.

join it from the north. In the mountains of Loxa and Zamora rise several little rivers, the conflux of which forms that of St. Jago; and from those of Cuenza others, which unite in the Paute: but this, on its union with the former, loses its name, being absorbed by the St. Jago, so called from a city of that name near which it joins the two others from Lauricocha and Apurimac. From the lofty deserts of Sangay issues the river Morona, which passing very near the city of Macas, runs in a south-east direction, till it loses itself in the principal channel of the Maragnon, at the distance of about twenty leagues east of Borja, the capital of the district of Maynas.

In the mountains of the jurisdiction of Riobamba, those of Latacunga, and of the town of San Miguel de Ibarra, are the sources of the rivers Pastaza and Tigre; and from Cotopaxi, and its Cordelera, issue the first branches of the rivers Coca and Napo. These, though their sources are at no remarkable distance, run to a vast extent before they unite; and retaining the name of Napo, fall into the Maragnon, after a course of above two hundred leagues in a direct line from east to west. From the mountains of the jurisdiction of San Miguel de Ibarra, issues the river Putu mayo, called also Ica; which, after running south-east about three hundred leagues, joins the Maragnon more eastward than the Napo. Lastly, in the jurisdiction of Popayan, the river Caqueta has its source. This river becomes divided into two branches. The western branch, called Yupura, disembogues itself into the Maragnon like another Nile, through seven or eight mouths, which are at such distance from each other, that the intermediate space between the first and the last is not less than an hundred leagues; and the other branch, which runs to the eastward is no less famous under the name of Negro.

The breadth and depth of the Maragnon are answerable to its vast length; and in the pongos or straits, where its breadth is contracted, its depth is augmented proportionally. In other parts it displays its whole grandeur, dividing itself into several large branches, including a multitude of islands; particularly in the intermediate space between the mouth of the Napo and that of the Coari, which lies something to the westward of the river Negro, where dividing itself into many branches, it forms an infinite number of islands. At the influx of the river Chuchunga, the place where the Maragnon becomes navigable, and where M. de la Condamine first embarked on it, it is two hundred and seventy yards broad, and above thirty fathom in depth. The islands formed by the Maragnon east of the Napo, terminate at the river Coari, where it again reunites its waters, and flows in one stream. Here its breadth is about half a league, and its depth upwards of an hundred fathoms. About one hundred leagues below the mouth of the Negro, the shores of the Maragnon begin to approach each other, near the afflux of the river Trumbetas. At this part, which is called the Estrecho de Pauxis, and where the breadth of the Maragnon is near eighteen hundred yards, the effect of the tides may be perceived, though the distance from the ocean is not less than two hundred leagues*.

* Id. *ibid.*

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After flowing through such a vast extent of country, and receiving the tribute of other rivers precipitated from the Cordeleras, or gliding in a more gentle course from remote provinces; after forming many circuits, cataracts, and straits; dividing itself into various branches, and forming a multitude of islands of different magnitudes, the Maragnon at length, from the mouth of the river Xingu, directs its course north-east, and enlarging its channel in a prodigious manner, as it were to enter the ocean with more majesty, forms in this astonishing space, several large and fertile islands; the chief of which is that of Joanes, formed by a branch of the great river that, under the name Tagiparu, separates from it twenty-five leagues below the mouth of the Xingu, and bending its course to the southward, in a direction opposite to that of the principal stream, opens a communication between the Maragnon and the river Dos Bocas, which is composed of the united waters of the Guanapu and Pacayas, and flows into this branch through a mouth of about two leagues in breadth. These are afterwards joined by the river Tocantines, the outlet of which is still broader than the former. The river Muju, on the east side of which stands the city of Gran Para, discharges its waters into the same stream, which afterwards receives the river Capi, that washes the city of the same name. The river Dos Bocas, after joining that of Tagiparu, runs eastward, forming an arch, as far as the river Tocantines, from which it continues its course north-east like the Maragnon, leaving in the middle the island of Joanes, which is nearly of a triangular figure, and about an hundred and fifty leagues in length. This island divides the Maragnon into two mouths, by which it disembogues itself into the sea. The principal of these mouths is about forty-five leagues broad, and the other twelve*.

By following the course of this vast body of waters, we have been insensibly conducted to the Portuguese settlements; but before we describe these, or the Indian tribes on the banks of the Maragnon, we must complete our account of the Spanish dominions in South America. For this purpose, it is necessary to leave the shores of the Atlantic, to cross the ridge of the Andes, and transport ourselves once more to the coasts of the South Sea. There we find Chili, the most important province that depends on the viceroyalty of Lima, extending from the frontiers of Peru to the Straits of Magellan, and eastward as far as the government of Buenos Ayres.

The Incas had established their dominion in some of the southern districts of this extensive region; but in the greater part of the country, its gallant and high spirited inhabitants maintained their independency. Allured by the fame of its opulence, the Spaniards early attempted the conquest of Chili, under Diego Almagro, and afterwards under Pedro de Valdivia. Both met with fierce opposition. The reasons that induced the former to relinquish the enterprise, and the disastrous fate of the latter, who was cut off with a considerable body of troops under his command, have been already related†. The spirited conduct

* Ut supra.

† Book I. c. ix. p. 283, 301.

of Francisco de Villagra, Valdivia's lieutenant, checked the progress of the Chilese, and saved the remainder of the Spaniards from destruction. By degrees all the champaign country along the coast was subjected to the Spanish dominion. The mountainous country is still possessed by the Puelches, Araucos, and other tribes of its original inhabitants, who are formidable neighbours to the Spaniards; and with whom, during the course of two centuries, they have been obliged to maintain perpetual hostilities, suspended only by a few intervals of insecure peace.

The first step, after war is resolved on among the Chilese, is to give notice to the different tribes for assembling. This they call *shooting the arrow*;—the summons being sent from village to village with the utmost silence and celerity. In these notices they specify the night when the irruption is to be made; and though advice of it is transmitted to the Indians who reside in the Spanish territories, nothing transpires. Nor is there a single instance, among all the Indians who have been taken up on suspicion, that one ever made a discovery; and as few preparations are necessary in this kind of war, the same tree from which they gather their food supplying them with lances and darts, their designs continue impenetrable till the terrible executions withdraw the veil*.

The members of the several tribes being assembled, a general is chosen, with the title of Toqui; and when the night fixed on for their bloody purpose arrives, the Chilese who live among the Spaniards rise and massacre them; after which they divide themselves into small parties, and destroy the villas, farm houses, and villages, murdering all the inhabitants without distinction, except the white women, whom they carry off. These parties afterwards unite, and in a body attack the larger settlements of the Spaniards; besiege the forts, and commit every kind of hostility: and their numbers and valour, rather than their discipline, have enabled them, on several occasions, to carry on their enterprises with success, notwithstanding all the measures taken by the Spanish government to obstruct them. They are so constantly supplied with reinforcements, that they are not sensible of their losses; but if these prove so considerable as to oblige them to desist, they retire to the distance of a few leagues, whence, after concealing themselves for some days, they make a sudden assault upon some other place; and when they find themselves in danger from the enemy, they abandon their huts, and retire into the more distant parts of the mountains. Being joined there by other tribes, they return with recruited strength, and take possession of their former dwellings, to dispute which would be the height of temerity†. It is this alternate succession of flight and resistance, of boldness and caution, which renders them invincible.

War is a kind of amusement, or desirable occupation to the Chilese; all their industry, which consists in the culture of a little spot of ground, and in the weaving of some coarse cloths for apparel, being resigned to the women. As it is neither expensive nor inconvenient to them, they have nothing to apprehend from its continuance except danger, which they court with avidity: hence it is.

* Ulloa, lib. viii. c. 9.

† Id. ibid.

BOOK II.

a constant rule with them, never to sue for peace. The pride of Spain must always condescend to make the first overtures. When these are favourably received a conference is held; and the president of Chili, and the Toqui or Indian general, attended by the most distinguished captains on both sides, settle the terms of accommodation at a convivial meeting. The peace is ratified by a mutual exchange of presents, after which both parties return to their respective habitations *.

The Chilese are no less haughty in their mode of trafficking with the Spaniards. Though passionately fond of European toys, and though edge-tools, and other kinds of hardware are necessary to their conveniency, they never leave their woods and mountains to procure them; so that the Spaniards are under the obligation of carrying these things to them, or of losing this branch of trade. Such as enter their country for this purpose, apply first to the heads of families, in whom alone resides all public authority, the oldest person of the family being respected as its governor. After the trader has obtained leave to sell, and mentioned the return he expects for his goods, he goes from village to village, distributing them indiscriminately to all who offer to buy, till he has disposed of his stock. He then returns to the village where he first made his appearance, giving notice to his customers that he is on his way home; on which every one brings, with the greatest punctuality, to the chief or senior's hut, the articles of exchange agreed on. Nor was there ever an instance of dishonesty in this traffic; the Chilese being alike exact in their payments, and faithful to their engagements †.

In consequence of this spirit of independency, the Spaniards have been obliged to give up all thoughts of extending their conquests, and reduced to the necessity of covering their frontier, by erecting forts at proper distances. These precautions are taken to prevent the Indians, who have submitted, from joining the independent tribes, as well as to repel the inroads of the latter. That part of Chili therefore, which may properly be denominated a Spanish province, is a narrow district, about nine hundred miles in length, extending along the coast from the desert of Atacamas to the island of Chiloe. Its climate is the most delicious in the New World, and is hardly equalled by that of any region on the face of the earth. Though bordering on the torrid zone, it never feels the extremity of heat, being screened on the east by the Andes, and refreshed from the west by cooling sea-breezes. The temperature of the air is so mild and equable, that the Spaniards give it the preference to the southern provinces of their native

* Ut supra.

† Ulloa, lib. viii. c. 9. So delicate a sense of justice in a whole people, who are almost strangers to government, and savage in their manners, must appear a very singular phenomenon in morals, to such as regard every virtue as the effect of culture: but those who consider justice as no less natural to the mind than reason, and reason as much a part of man's nature as sensation or appetite, will not be surprised to find that a people who are strangers to fear, should also be strangers to fraud; that a people jealous of their independency, should also be jealous of their honour; or that the same reason which tells them no man has a right to intringe on their liberty, or deprive them of the produce of their industry, should likewise teach them to respect the property of others, with whom they are not engaged in hostility.

country. The fertility of the soil corresponds with the benignity of the climate, and is wonderfully accommodated to European productions. The most valuable of these, corn, wine, and oil, especially the two former, abound in Chili, to a degree that is altogether incredible. The corn harvest is reckoned a bad one, when it does not yield an hundred fold *. Oranges and lemons excepted, all the fruits introduced from Europe attain their full maturity here. The animals of our hemisphere not only multiply, but improve in this delightful region. The horned cattle are of a larger size than those of Spain; and its breed of horses surpasses, both in beauty and spirit, the famous Andalusian race, from which they sprung †. Nor has nature exhausted her bounty on the surface of the earth, she has stored its bowels with riches. Valuable mines of gold, of silver, of copper, and of lead, have been discovered in various parts of Chili.

A country distinguished by so many blessings, one might be apt to conclude, would early become a favourite station of the Spaniards, and must have been cultivated with peculiar predilection and care. On the contrary, great part of it remains unoccupied. In all this extent of territory, there is not above sixty thousand white inhabitants, and about three times that number of negroes and people of a mixed race. Nor are there above five towns deserving the name of settlements; namely, Valdivia, Concepcion, Valparaiso, and Coquimbo or La Serena, all sea-ports, and St. Jago, the capital, an inland town. Except in the neighbourhood of these, there is little culture, and scarce any habitation. The most fertile soil in America lies waste, and some of its most promising mines remain unwrought. Strange as may appear this neglect of the Spaniards to avail themselves of advantages, which seem to court their acceptance, the causes of it are by no means inexplicable.

The only intercourse of Spain with her colonies on the South Sea, as we have already had occasion to observe, was carried on during two centuries by the annual fleet to Porto Bello. All the produce of the colonies was shipped in the ports of Callao or Arica, for Panama, and carried thence across the isthmus; all the commodities which they received from the mother-country, were conveyed from Panama to the same harbours: thus both the exports and imports of Chili passed through the hands of the merchants of Peru. These had of course, a profit on each: in both transactions the inhabitants of Chili felt their own subordination: having no immediate communication with the parent state, they depended upon another province for the disposal of their productions, as well as for the supply of their wants. Under such discouragements population could not flourish, and industry was destitute of one chief incitement, a ready return for the fruits of its exertions. But since Spain, in consequence of the new system which we have examined, now carries on her commerce with the colonies on the South Sea, by ships that go round Cape Horn, a direct intercourse is opened between Chili and the mother-country; and as the gold, the silver, and other commodities of the province, are exchanged in its own harbours for the manufactures of

* Id. *ibid.*† Ut *supra*.

BOOK II. Europe, Chili may probably rise to that degree of importance among the Spanish colonies to which it is entitled by its own natural advantages. It may become the granary of Peru, and the other provinces along the Pacific Ocean: it may supply them with wine, with cattle, with horses, with hemp, and many other articles for which they depend upon Europe. Though the new system has been fully established only a few years, the beneficial effects of it begin already to be observed in the articles here specified*; and if it shall be adhered to with any steadiness for half a century, one may venture to foretel, that population, industry and opulence, will advance in this province with rapid progress.

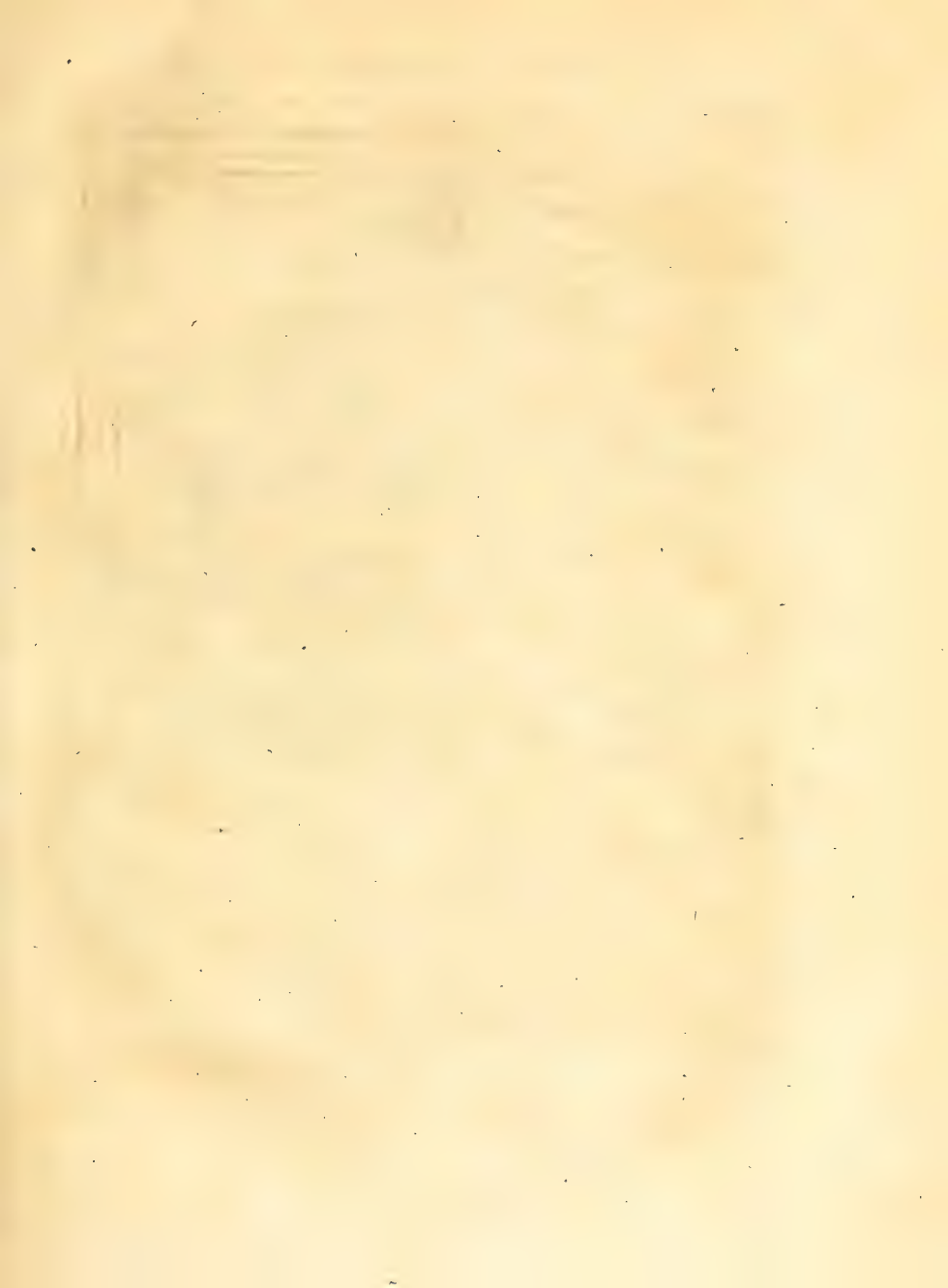
St. Jago, the capital of Chili, is situated in the middle of a delightful plain, twenty-four leagues in extent, through which the river Mapocha flows in meanders, and runs so near the city as to supply it abundantly with water, by means of conduits. St. Jago is about a mile in length, and two thirds of a mile in breadth. On the opposite bank of the river, which washes the north side of the city, is a large suburb called Chumba, and on the east side is a mountain, called St. Lucia. The streets are wide, straight, handsomely paved, and all cross one another regularly; running either directly east and west, or north and south. In the centre of the city stands the great square, the middle of which is adorned with a beautiful fountain. The north side is occupied by the palace of the royal audience; the west side, by the cathedral and the bishop's palace; the south side by shops, and the east by private houses. The other parts of the city are divided into insulated squares, regular, well built, and commodious. Every house has a court before, and a garden behind it, and is plentifully supplied with water from the river; a circumstance which greatly contributes to the health and convenience of the inhabitants, as well as to the elegance of the city. St. Jago is supposed to contain about five thousand families, of which nearly one half are Spaniards†. Valdivia, Valparaiso, and Conception, are considerable towns; and the two first are well garrisoned and fortified, especially Valdivia.

To the east of the Andes, the provinces of Tucuman and Rio de la Plata border on Chili, and like it were dependent on the viceroyalty of Peru, before the new government was established at Buenos Ayres, the jurisdiction of which has been already mentioned. These regions of immense extent, stretch in length from north to south above thirteen hundred miles, and in breadth more than a thousand. This vast country naturally forms itself into two great divisions; one on the north, and the other on the south of Rio de la Plata. The former comprehends Paraguay, the famous missions of the Jesuits, and several other districts; the latter contains the governments of Tucuman and Buenos-Ayres, of which we shall first speak.

The Spaniards entered this part of America by the river De la Plata; and though a succession of cruel disasters beset them in their early attempts to establish their dominion here, they were encouraged to persist in the design, at first by the hopes of discovering mines in the interior country, and afterwards by the

* Campomanes,

† Ulloa, lib. viii. c. 7. Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIII.
necessity





Inhabitants of the STRAIGHTS of MAGELLAN, commonly called *White Scalp.*
PATAGONIANS.

necessity of occupying it, in order to prevent any other nation from settling there, and penetrating by this route into their rich possessions in Peru. But except Buenos-Ayres, they have made no settlement of any consequence in all this extensive country. There are indeed scattered over it a few places on which they have endeavoured to add some dignity by erecting them into bishopricks; but they are, after all, no better than paltry villages, each with two or three hundred inhabitants. One circumstance, however, which was not originally foreseen, has contributed to render this district, though thinly peopled, of considerable importance. The province of Tucuman, together with the country to the south of the Plata, instead of being covered with wood like other parts of America, forms one vast plain, almost without a tree *. The soil is a deep fertile mould, watered by many streams descending from the Andes, and clothed in perpetual verdure. In this rich pasturage the horses and cattle imported by the Spaniards from Europe have multiplied to a degree that almost exceeds belief. This has enabled the inhabitants not only to open a lucrative trade with Peru, by supplying it with horned cattle, horses, and mules, but to carry on a commerce no less beneficial, by the exportation of hides to Europe.

From both these, the colony has derived great advantages; but its commodious situation for carrying on the contraband trade, has been the chief source of its prosperity. While the court of Madrid adhered to its ancient system, with respect to its communication with America, the River de la Plata lay so much out of the course of Spanish navigation, that interlopers, almost without any

* This is also the case with Patagonia, and the whole Terra Magellanica. There the Spaniards have established no settlements, and the country is too little known to require a particular description; but the famous Patagonians, who form part of the inhabitants, and have during two centuries and a half, afforded a subject of controversy to the learned, and an object of wonder to the vulgar, must not be passed over in silence. Their proper station is in that part of the interior country, which lies on the banks of the river Negro; though in the hunting season, they often roam as far as the straits which separate Terra del Fuego from the main-land. The first accounts of this people were brought to Europe by the companions of Magellan, who described them as a gigantic race, above eight feet high, and of strength in proportion to their enormous size. Accounts of a similar nature have been given at different times, by various navigators, who have visited the Magellanic regions; and latterly by Commodore Byron and his crew, who sailed through the Straits in 1764, according to whose Narrative the common size of the Patagonians was estimated to be eight feet, and many of them much taller. By the Captains Wallis and Carteret, who actually measured them in 1766, they were found to be from six feet to six feet five or seven inches in height. These seem to have been the very people whose size had been so much overrated in 1764, (and who were probably beyond the common standard); for several of them had beads and red baize of the same kind with what had been put on board Captain Wallis's ship, and he naturally concluded that they had got these from Mr. Byron. Hawkesworth's Voyages, vol. I. They were again measured in 1767, by M. Bougainville, whose account agrees nearly with that of Captain Wallis. Mr. Falkner, who resided as a missionary sixty years in the southern parts of America, says, that "the Patagonians, or Puelches, are a large-bodied people; but I never heard of that gigantic race which others have mentioned, though I have seen persons of all the different tribes of southern Indians." *Introd. Descript. Patagonia.* These testimonies, it is hoped, will be sufficient to banish the idea of a race of giants, inhabiting the extreme parts of South America.

BOOK II. risk of being observed or obstructed, could pour in European manufactures in such quantities, as not only supplied the wants of the colony, but were conveyed into all the eastern districts of Peru. When the Portuguese in Brazil extended their settlements to the banks of Rio de la Plata, a new channel was opened, by which prohibited commodities flowed into the Spanish territories, with still more facility and in greater abundance. This illegal traffic, however detrimental to the parent state, contributed to the increase of the settlement which had the immediate benefit of it, and Buenos-Ayres became gradually a populous and opulent town. What may be the effect of the alteration lately made in the government of this colony, cannot yet be determined; but if the viceroy attends to his duty, a check will certainly be given to the contraband trade with the Portuguese, which was become so extensive as must have put a final stop to the exportation of commodities from Spain to her southern colonies.

The city of Buenos-Ayres, founded in 1535, by Don Pedro de Mendoza, stands on the south side of the Rio de la Plata, at a place called Cape Blanco, seventy leagues from the sea, and close by a small river. The situation, as it regards the ground, is in a large plain, rising by a gentle ascent from the small river; and is truly paradisaical, whether we regard the temperature of the climate, the fertility of the soil, or that beautiful verdure which overspreads the whole face of the country, of which the inhabitants have an uninterrupted prospect, as far as the eye can reach. The city is of considerable extent, and is supposed to contain sixteen thousand inhabitants, of which the whites may make one fourth. The rest are either Indians or a mixed race. The houses, which had formerly only mud walls, and were thatched with straw, are now built of more durable materials, and generally tiled. They have commonly one story, besides the ground floor. The principal square is very spacious, and the cathedral is an elegant building. Both the American and European fruits come to full perfection here, and are in great plenty, as are all kinds of provisions*. Buenos-Ayres, however, labours under many inconveniences as a commercial city. Its distance from the sea is of itself a considerable disadvantage, and that is augmented by the dangerous navigation of the Plata, and the rocks and shoals which prevent ships of burden from coming up to it. As a remedy for these evils, a settlement has been founded, on an excellent harbour, in the bay of Maldonado, near the mouth of the great river. This, which may at present be considered as the port of Buenos-Ayres, will in all probability soon become its rival, and the staple of the trade of Paraguay, as the register-ships failing to or from the South Sea, will here find a safe port, and all the refreshments they may want. Maldonado is defended by a strong fort, and a garrison of two hundred men. Buenos Ayres has also a good fortification for its security, and a garrison of one thousand regulars†.

The only district worthy of attention in the northern division of the provinces of Tucuman and Rio de la Plata, is that of Paraguay, the capital of which is Assump-

* Dillea, lib. vii. c. 15. *Hist. Gen. des Voyages*, tom. XIII.

† *Id. ibid.*

tion. This city as it is pompously called, is small and irregular; in a word, a petty village, and the other Spanish settlements are still less considerable. But Paraguay, though unimportant as a colony, is entitled notwithstanding to particular notice in a general history of America, on account of that singular system of policy established there by the Jesuits.

Towards the beginning of the last century, those fathers represented to the court of Madrid, that their want of success in their missions was owing to the scandal which the immorality of the Spaniards never fail to give, and to the hatred which their insolent behaviour caused in the Indians, wherever they came. They insinuated, that but for these impediments, the empire of the gospel might, by their labours, have been extended into the most unknown parts of America; and that all those countries might be subjected to the dominion of his Catholic Majesty without expence, and without violence. This remonstrance was listened to with attention: the sphere of the labours of those pious champions was marked out; an uncontrolled liberty was given to them within the prescribed limits; and the governors of the adjacent provinces had orders not to interfere; or suffer any person to enter this pale, without the consent of the fathers; who, on their part agreed to pay a certain capitation tax, in proportion to their flock, and to send a certain number of Indians to the king's works whenever they should be demanded, and the missions become populous enough to furnish them.

On these terms the Jesuits entered upon the scene of action, and opened their campaign with the spiritual conquest of the Guaranies, an Indian nation inhabiting the banks of the rivers Uruguay and Parana. Twelve thousand of these were removed into Paraguay, in order to save them from the incursions of the Portuguese, who regardless of the progress of the gospel, carried off the new converts as slaves to labour in the mines of Brazil. A like number of inhabitants was also brought from Tappi, and formed into communities. These suddenly became considerable towns, the number of which, in 1734, amounted to thirty-two, and were supposed to contain forty thousand families. About the same time the Chiquitos, another Indian nation, who embraced Christianity towards the end of the last century, had formed seven towns, each of which contained above six thousand inhabitants*. By the increase of these, and the acquisition from other Indian tribes, the Jesuits are said to have had upwards of three hundred thousand families under their spiritual government in 1760.

The nature of that government, and the means by which such a multitude of wandering savages were collected, and brought to submit to civil regulations and religious observances, require an attentive examination. With no arms but those of persuasion, the Jesuits freely mingled with the most barbarous tribes. They acquired their language, and by all those arts of address and insinuation, for which they have so long been famous, they gained the confidence of the wild Indians. They engaged to protect them from the violences of the Spaniards and Portuguese, as well as to secure them against those inconveniences to which they were exposed.

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 14, 15.

BOOK II.

in their forests, provided they would agree to live in society, and contribute to supply each other's wants, according to the instructions that should be given them. As soon as they had got together a certain number of families, they began to procure them all the advantages they had promised them; and when, by making them happy, they had rendered them tractable, they unfolded to them the doctrines of the gospel: they did not pretend to make them Christians, before they had made them men.

The Indians, who had already experienced every thing they had reason to expect from their pious legislators, in regard to the conveniencies of this world, doubted not what was told them of the next: they eagerly embraced the doctrine of immortality. They formerly respected, they now adored the Jesuits; and that politic body did not fail to take the proper steps for rendering perpetual the influence which they had acquired. They reserved to themselves all civil and religious authority, and in a manner all property, by having the absolute disposal of every thing belonging to the community. But that matter can only be understood by a particular description.

This description shall be framed without any regard to the abolition of the Jesuits as a religious order, or the changes that may have taken place in Paraguay in consequence of their disgrace at the court of Spain, as it would otherwise be impossible to form any distinct idea of that extraordinary commonwealth which they had established.—Over each of the missions, or districts of Paraguay, a Jesuit presides in chief. He is supreme in all causes, civil, military, and ecclesiastical, and governs not only with the sway of a sovereign, but with the reputation of an oracle. In every town, however, magistrates are settled, answerable to those in the Spanish cities. These are chosen by the Indians from among their own body, but they must be confirmed by the presiding Jesuit, who reserves to himself a power of rejecting such as are unqualified for their function; and in order, as is pretended, to prevent the abuse of authority, no magistrate is permitted to proceed to the execution of any sentence, without previously acquainting the priest with the state of the matter, that he may compare the offence with the decree. The person found really guilty is delivered up to punishment, which generally consists in imprisonment for a certain number of days, to which sometimes fasting is added; but if the offence be very heinous, the delinquent is whipt, which is the most severe punishment they inflict, murder, robbery, and such atrocious crimes being almost unknown among the converts in Paraguay*.

The practice of confession, indeed, answers in a great measure the end of penal laws, by maintaining a purity of manners. Religion brings the guilty person to the feet of the magistrate. There, far from palliating his crime, remorse makes him aggravate it; instead of endeavouring to elude his punishment, he implores it on his knees. The more public and severe it is, the more doth it contribute to quiet the conscience of the criminal, by stifling the pangs of remorse. Before the execution of the sentence, in judicial cases, a discourse is pronounced

* Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 15.

by the priest, representing with the greatest softness and sympathy, the nature of the offence, and the vengeance denounced against it by Heaven; so that the delinquent receives the chastisement to which he is subjected with all humility and resignation, as a brotherly correction necessary to his eternal welfare*. Theocracy, in a word, would be the most excellent of all governments if it were possible to preserve it in its purity; but to effect this, it would be necessary that it should always be under the direction of virtuous men, deeply impressed with the real principles on which it is founded: it would be necessary that religion should teach nothing but the duties of society; that it should consider nothing as a crime but what violates the natural rights of mankind; that its precepts should not substitute prayers in place of labour, vain ceremonies instead of works of charity, or imaginary scruples for just remorse.

It can hardly however be expected, that Jesuits educated in Spain or Italy should not have transmitted to Paraguay the monastic notions and practices of Rome or Madrid. But if it is allowed that they have introduced some abuses, it must also be confessed, that these are accompanied with so many advantages, that perhaps no society upon earth could have established such a number of salutary regulations with so few of a contrary tendency. Nothing is omitted in Paraguay that can contribute either to the conveniency or the security of the community, or fill individuals with that emulation which is necessary to unfold the powers of the human mind. Every town has a particular armoury, in which are kept all the fire-arms, swords, and other weapons, used by the militia, when they take the field, whether to repel the insults of the Portuguese, to which they were long exposed, or of any savage tribe; and that they may be more dexterous in the management of their weapons, they are exercised on the evening of every Sunday and holiday in the market places of the towns. All persons in every town capable of bearing arms are divided into companies, and have their proper officers who owe this distinction to their military talents. Their uniform is richly laced with gold or silver, according to their rank, and embroidered with the devices of their towns. In this dress they always appear on holidays, and at the times of exercise. The magistrates have also very magnificent habits of ceremony, which they wear on solemn occasions; a numerous retinue, and every thing that can contribute to exalt them in their own opinion, or in the eyes of their countrymen.

All other things correspond to this parade. The houses of the Indians are built with so much symmetry and conveniency, and so completely and elegantly furnished, as to excel those of the Spaniards in this part of America. The churches are large, and well built, and with regard to decorations, not inferior to the richest in Peru. Each has its band of music, consisting of a great number of vocal and instrumental performers, and divine service is celebrated in them with all the pomp and solemnity of the Romish cathedrals†. The Jesuits have found the happy secret of making their worship amusive without rendering

* Id. *ibid.* Murat. *Relat. des Mifs. de Parag.*

† Ulloa, *lib. vii. c. 15.*

BOOK II.

it an indecent farce; of blending pleasure with the exercise of piety. It is in Paraguay that religion is amiable, and that the people first love it in its ministers. Nothing can equal the purity of manners, the mild and tender zeal, and the paternal tenderness of the Jesuits in this country. Every missionary is truly the father, as he is the guide, both spiritual and temporal, of the people under his government. His authority is not felt; because he neither commands, forbids, nor punishes any thing, but what is commanded, forbidden, and punished, by the religion which they all reverence and love equally with himself.

The country occupied by the Paraguay missions is of very great extent; comprehending part of the government of Santa Cruz de la Sierra towards the south, and reaching from Buenos-Ayres as far east as the captainship of St. Vincent in Brazil. The air in general is moist and temperate, though in some places it is rather cold. The temperate parts abound with all kinds of provisions. Cotton grows here in such quantities, that every little village gathers annually above two thousand arobas, and the Indians are very ingenious in weaving it into stuffs for exportation. A great deal of tobacco is also planted here; but these articles are far less advantageous to the inhabitants than the leaf known by the name of the *Herb of Paraguay*, which alone would be sufficient to form a flourishing commerce in this province, it being the only one which produces it. Thence it is sent all over Peru and Chili, where its use is universal. It is the leaf of a middle sized tree, and is dried and infused in the manner of tea. Those commodities are carried for sale to the cities of Santa Fè and Buenos Ayres, where the fathers have factors; the Indians, particularly the Guaranies, wanting the sagacity and address, so absolutely necessary to procure success in commercial affairs. These factors dispose of what is consigned to them from Paraguay; and after paying into the revenue office the capitation-tax for the Indians of each district, lay out the remainder of the money in purchasing such European goods as the missions are in want of. The other products of the lands, together with the cattle, are made use of for the subsistence of the inhabitants, among whom they are distributed with the greatest regularity and œconomy*.

The missions of the Guaranies are all under one superior, who nominates the assistant priests of the towns, the presiding priests being collated by the provincials of the order. His residence is at Candelaria, which lies in the centre of all the missions: but he frequently visits the other towns, in order to superintend their governments; and at the same time to concert measures for sending some of the fathers among the wild Indians, to conciliate their affections, and by degrees work their conversion. In this important office he is assisted by two vice-superiors, one of whom resides at Parana, and the other on the river Uruguay. All these missions, though so numerous and dispersed, are formed as it were into one college, of which the superior may be considered as the master or head; and every town is like a family, governed by a wise and affectionate parent, in the person of the priest †. The missions of the Chiquitos have a distinct superior,

* Id. *ibid.*

† Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 15.

but with the same functions as he who presides over the Guaranies, and the priests also are on the same footing *.

No town is without a school for teaching reading, writing, dancing, and music; and in the courts of the house belonging to the priest of every town, are shops or workhouses for painters, sculptors, gilders, silversmiths, locksmiths, carpenters, weavers, watchmakers, and the practitioners of all other mechanic arts and trades, who work for the benefit of the whole town, under the inspection of the priests coadjutors. Every town has also a kind of *Beaterio*, or Magdalen, where women of ill fame are placed, and which likewise serves as a retreat for married women, who have no families, during the absence of their husbands. For the support of this house, as well as of orphans, widows, and those who by age or any other circumstance are disabled from earning a livelihood, two days in each week are set apart, when the inhabitants of every village are obliged to cultivate and sow a certain piece of ground called *Labor de la Comunidad*, "the Labour of the Community;" and the surplus of the produce is applied to procure furniture and decorations for the church, and cloathing for the widows, orphans, aged, and disabled persons. By this benevolent plan all distress is prevented, and them earnest of the inhabitants is provided with every necessary of life †.

It should seem that men must have multiplied considerably under a government, where none are idle or fatigued with labour; where food is equal in wholesomeness, plenty, and quality for all the citizens; where every one is conveniently lodged, and well cloathed; and where the aged and the sick, widows and orphans, are not only assisted in a manner unknown in all other parts of the world, but where every one marries from choice, and not from interest, and where a number of children are considered as a blessing, and can never be troublesome:—where debauch, the necessary consequence of idleness, which corrupts alike the opulent and the needy, never hastens the period of natural infirmities, or tends to abridge the term of human life; where nothing serves to excite artificial passions, or to counteract those which are implanted by nature and regulated by reason; where the people enjoy the advantages of trade, and are not exposed to vice and luxury; where plentiful magazines, and a friendly intercourse with persons united in the bonds of the same religion, and under the same civil regulations, are a security against any scarcity that might happen from the inconstancy or inclemency of the seasons; where justice has never been reduced to the necessity of condemning a single malefactor to death, or to any punishment of a long duration; where the very name of a tax or a law-suit, those two terrible scourges which every where else afflict mankind, are unknown!—such a country must naturally be expected to be the most populous in the world, and yet it is far from being so. The population of Paraguay has by no means increased in proportion to the number of the original converts, the accessions they have received, the time since their establishment in communities, or the tranquillity and plenty in which they live.

* Id. ibid.

† Ut supra.

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In order to account for this want of increase, it has been supposed that the Jesuits had propagated that love of celibacy among their converts, which was to prevalent over Europe during the dark ages, and which is still very common in Spanish America. But this conjecture is entirely void of foundation. The Jesuits have never conveyed to their converts any idea of a superstition utterly inconsistent with their political plan, and which would have been sufficient to prejudice the Indians against their best institutions. On the contrary, they provide early for the marriage of their young people, as well to prevent disorders as to multiply the number of their subjects; and as interest can be no motive to the union, nor any bar against it, where there is no property, few difficulties occur in cementing it. The lover applies to the presiding Jesuit, informs him of his desire of marriage, and names the party. The girl is consulted; and if there is no objection on her side, the nuptials are immediately celebrated. The young couple are supplied with all necessaries for their establishment out of the public stores, and have their portion of labour assigned them, by which they are to make amends for what they have received, and to contribute to the common support of themselves and others*.

The want of property has also been assigned as a reason for the slowness of population among the Guaranies. But the inconveniencies which, in other countries arise from the want of property, and impede population, as well as every laudable pursuit, are not felt in Paraguay. All there are sure of subsistence, which is every thing in a state where luxury is unknown; consequently all enjoy the great advantages of property, though deprived in a strict sense of the right to it. This privation therefore, whatever influence it may have upon the intellectual faculties, and of course on the character of the people, by depriving the mind of one of its most powerful incentives to action, cannot well be supposed to obstruct the progress of population, which depends on the temperate indulgence of the most natural of all the passions. To the gratification of this passion the inhabitants of Paraguay are invited by the climate, and encouraged by their civil institutions, while they are restrained from excess by their industrious and temperate course of life. The defect in population must be imputed to other causes.

The Guaranies have, at different times, suffered greatly from the inroads of the Portuguese, and of the savage tribes that hover about their habitations, in order to seize their provisions. By the first they have been carried into slavery, and by the latter they have been massacred, with unfeeling barbarity. These calamities have been followed by another far more destructive. The small-pox, a distemper every where dreadful, has proved more peculiarly terrible in America, and more fatal in Paraguay than in any other country. It destroys thousands in a short time, and scarce any recover of it. Besides these causes of depopulation, the Guaranies are exposed to others arising from the nature of their climate, which occasions contagious distempers, especially on the banks of the Parana, where

* Muratori, *Relat. des Missions des Parag.* Charlevoix, *Hist. de Parag.*

thick and constant fogs, under a sultry sky, render the air damp and unwholesome*.

The Jesuits have been accused of augmenting those evils, by obliging their subjects to dig for the precious metals; but the Spanish ministry, after the most diligent search, have not been able to discover that a single mine was ever wrought in Paraguay. The Jesuits were too good politicians to encourage such a pernicious species of industry. They have with more appearance of reason been accused of aspiring at absolute independency. It is difficult otherwise to account for that excessive care which they took to preclude all intercourse between their subjects and those of Spain, and that horror with which they inspired them for strangers in general. A policy which founded obedience and purity of morals on such illiberal principles, must surely have been dictated by selfish jealousy. Apprehensions were even entertained, that this spiritual republic might one day attempt to overthrow that power under which it had been raised. But these have been dispelled, by the readiness which the Jesuits shewed, on their being banished by the court of Madrid, to evacuate an empire which they could so easily have defended; for their subjects, yet uncorrupted by luxury, would have fought with the same zeal that overturned so many monarchies, by the arms of the disciples of Wodin and Mahomet, and which inspired the reformers in Holland and Germany with that enthusiastic courage, which secured to them their civil and religious liberties.

In consequence of this conduct, the greater part of Europe has exempted the Jesuits in Paraguay from the charge of ambition, so generally brought against them by their enemies. Philosophy however, which, as Raynal very justly observes, looks beyond the particular interests of nations, will suspend its judgment of these legislators, till the conduct of the inhabitants of Paraguay shall afford a proof either in their favour or against them. If those Indians finally submit to the tyranny of Spain, which has neither the right to govern them nor forces to enable her to do it, there will be reason to believe that the Jesuits have taken more pains to teach them obedience, than to give them just ideas of natural equity, with which, while savages, they were acquainted in some degree; and that these fathers, in availing themselves of their ignorance to bend them to submission, though they may have made them more happy than they were in a state of nature, have yet reserved to themselves the power of rendering them one day or another the instruments of their own arbitrary will. But if the inhabitants of Paraguay, armed and disciplined as they are, should repulse the rapacious oppressors of their country; if they should avenge America of all the blood that Spain has shed; the enlightened few, who are superior to vulgar prejudices, will then say, That the Jesuits have laboured for the happiness of mankind with the disinterested spirit of virtue; that they have ruled over the Indians only to instruct them; that while they gave them a particular religion, they left them to the fundamental principles of justice, which are the first precepts of

* Raynal, liv. viii. Ulloa, lib. vii. c. 15.

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natural religion; and that they have chiefly impressed on their minds that maxim, which is the basis of every lawful and permanent community, that it is a crime for men collected together in society to consent to any form of government, which, by abridging them of the liberty of disposing of their own fate, may one day make it their duty to resist their rulers.

The disputes which have lately prevailed between the courts of Spain and Portugal, and which are not yet finally terminated, in regard to the countries north of Rio de la Plata, render it impossible to give any satisfactory account of the present state of Paraguay. But before we conclude this chapter, it will be proper to say a few words concerning the general state of the church, and the character of the Spanish clergy in America, as well as of the nature and amount of the revenues of the crown there.

The Romish superstition, as already observed, appears with its utmost pomp in the New World. In countries where riches abound, and the people are fond of parade, religion must assume it, in order to attract their veneration. This propensity to ostentation has therefore been indulged with little harm: the early introduction of monasteries into the Spanish colonies, and the inconsiderate zeal in multiplying them, have been attended with consequences more fatal. Scarce had the Spaniards taken possession of America, when, with a most preposterous policy, they began to erect convents, where persons of both sexes were shut up under a vow to defeat the purpose of nature, and to counteract the first of her laws, at a time that every individual should have been incited to augment the strength and number of the community. Influenced by a misguided piety, which ascribes transcendent merit to a state of celibacy, or allured by the prospect of that listless ease, which in sultry climates is deemed supreme felicity, numbers crowded into these mansions of sloth and superstition, and are lost to society. As none but persons of Spanish extraction are admitted into the monasteries of the New World, the evil is more sensibly felt, and every monk or nun may be considered as an active member withdrawn from civil life.

The impropriety of such foundations in any country, where the extent of territory requires additional hands to cultivate it, is sufficiently obvious; yet from a mistaken idea of monastic sanctity, religious houses have multiplied in Spanish America to a degree that is truly amazing. In New Spain alone they exceed four hundred *, and the number is proportionally great in Peru. Near one third of the inhabitants may be supposed to be shut up in those retirements. But Spanish America is exempted from one species of ecclesiastical abuse. No distinction is there known between spiritual and temporal jurisdiction. The king is the only superior; his name alone is heard: no dependence upon any foreign power has been introduced. Papal bulls are of no force there, till they have been previously examined, and approved of by the royal council of the Indies †. To this limitation of the jurisdiction of the apostolic see, Spain is indebted, in a great measure, for the uniform tranquillity that has reigned in her American dominions.

* Torquemad. Mond. Ind. lib. xix. c. 32.

† Recop. lib. i. tit. 9.

The complete establishment of the American church in all the Spanish settlements was, in the year 1649, one patriarch, six archbishops, thirty-two bishops, three hundred and forty-six prebends, two abbots, five royal chaplains, and eight hundred and forty convents*. In viewing the state of colonies, where the number and influence of ecclesiastics is so great, the character of this powerful body is an object that merits particular attention. A considerable part of the secular clergy in Mexico and Peru are natives of Spain. As persons accustomed by their education to the retirement and indolence of an academic life are less capable of active enterprise, and less disposed to strike into new paths, than any other order of men, the ecclesiastical adventurers by whom the American church is recruited, are commonly such as, from want of merit or connexions, have little prospect of success in their own country. Hence the secular priests in the New World are still less distinguished than their brethren in Spain, for literary accomplishments of any species; and though by the ample provision which has been made for the American church, many of its members enjoy that ease and independence, which is favourable to the cultivation of science, the body of secular clergy has hardly during two centuries and an half, produced one author whose works possess such a degree of merit, as to attract the notice of enlightened nations.

But the greater part of the ecclesiastics in the Spanish settlements are regulars. On the discovery of America, a new field opened to the pious zeal of the monastic orders; and with a becoming alacrity, they immediately sent forth missionaries to labour in the uncultivated wild. The first attempt to instruct and convert the Americans was by monks; and, as soon as the conquest of any province was completed, and its ecclesiastical establishment began to assume some form, the popes, as the reward of their industry, permitted the missionaries of the four mendicant orders to accept of parochial charges in America; to perform all spiritual functions; and to receive the tithes, and other emoluments of the benefice, without depending on the bishop of the diocese, or being subject to his censures. In consequence of this liberty, a new career of usefulness, as well as new objects of ambition presented themselves. Whenever a call is made for a fresh supply, men of the most ardent and aspiring minds, impatient under the restraint of a cloister—weary of its insipid uniformity, and fatigued with the irksome repetition of its frivolous functions, offer their service with eagerness, and repair to the New World in quest of liberty and distinction. Nor do they pursue them without success. The highest ecclesiastical honours, and most lucrative preferments in Mexico and Peru, are often in the possession of regulars; and to them chiefly the inhabitants are indebted for any portion of science that is cultivated among them.

But the same disgust with monastic life, to which the New World owes some instructors of worth and abilities, filled it with others of a very different character. The giddy, the profligate, the avaricious, to whom the poverty and rigid

* Gil Gonzalez Davila *Theatro Ecclesiastico de las Ind. Occident.* Pref.

discipline of a convent are intolerable, consider a mission to America as a release from mortification and bondage. There they soon obtain some parochial charge; and far removed by their situation from the inspection of their monastic superiors, and exempt by their character, from the jurisdiction of their diocesan*, they are hardly subject to any controul. Accordingly many of the regular clergy in the Spanish settlements, are not only destitute of the virtues becoming their profession, but regardless of that external decorum and respect for the opinion of mankind, which preserve a semblance of worth where the reality is wanting. Some, in contempt of their vow of poverty, engage openly in commerce, and are so rapaciously eager in amassing wealth, that they become the most grievous oppressors of the Indians, whom it was their duty to have protected. Others, with no less flagrant violation of their vow of chastity, indulge without disguise in the most dissolute licentiousness†.

The revenues of the church in Spanish America are immense‡, and those of the crown are very considerable, notwithstanding all the defalcations caused by the illicit importation of foreign commodities, or by the fraudulent arts of the inhabitants. The royal revenue arises from taxes of various kinds, which may be divided into three principal branches. The first contains what is paid to the king, as sovereign, or superior lord of the New World. To this class belongs the duty on gold and silver raised from the mines, and the tribute exacted from the Indians. The former is termed by the Spaniards the *right of signiory*, the latter the *duty of vassalage*. The second branch comprehends the numerous duties upon commerce, which accompany and oppress it in every step of its progress, from the greatest transactions of the wholesale merchant, to the petty vender by retail. The third includes what accrues to the king as head of the church, and administrator of ecclesiastical funds in the New World. In consequence of this he receives the first fruits, or annats, spoils, and other spiritual revenues, levied by the apostolic chamber in Europe; and he is likewise entitled to the profit arising from the sales of the bull of Cruzado. This, which is published every two years, contains an absolution from past offences by the pope; and, among other immunities, a permission to eat several kinds of prohibited food during lent, and on meagre days. The

* Avendano, Theat. Indic. vol. II.

† Gage's Survey. Correal Frazier, Voyage Robertson, Hist. Amer. lib. viii. It is remarkable, that all the authors who censure the licentiousness of the Spanish regulars, censure in vindicating the conduct of the Jesuits. Formed under a discipline more perfect than that of the other monastic orders, or animated by that concern for the honour of their society, which took such full possession of every member, the Jesuits both in Mexico and Peru, have maintained a most irreproachable decency of manners. Id. ibid.

‡ The revenues of the American church arise in the first place, as already observed, (book II. c. 1.) from a tenth out of the produce of all lands; and that not only in simple culture, but in many articles manufactured, as sugar and indigo. In the second place, it consists of the donatives of individuals, whose profuse liberality in endowing churches and monasteries has been carried to such an height, that there is some reason to believe the clergy may one day become possessed of the whole landed property. In Peru there is scarce a house that does not hold of the church. Raynal, lib. vii.

monks employed in dispersing those bulls, extol their virtues with all the fervour of interested eloquence; the people, ignorant and credulous, listen with implicit assent; and every person in the Spanish colonies of European, Creolian, or mixed race, purchases a bull, which is deemed essential to his salvation, at the rate set upon it by government *!

What may be the amount of those various funds, it is almost impossible to determine with precision. The extent of the Spanish dominions in America, the jealousy of government, which renders them inaccessible to foreigners, the mysterious silence which the Spaniards are accustomed to observe with respect to the interior state of their colonies, combine in covering this subject with a veil which it is not easy to remove. But an account apparently no less accurate than it is curious has lately been published of the royal revenue in New Spain, from which we may form some idea with respect to what is collected in other provinces. According to that account, the crown does not receive from all the departments of taxation in New Spain, above a million of our money, from which one half must be deducted as the expence of the provincial establishment †.

Peru, it is probable, yields a sum not inferior to this; and if we suppose that all the other regions of Spanish America, including the islands, furnish a third share of equal value, we shall not perhaps be far wide from the truth, if

* The price paid for the bull varies according to the rank of different persons. Those in the lowest order, who are servants or slaves, pay two reals of plate, or one shilling: other Spaniards pay eight reals, and those in public office, or who hold encomiendas, sixteen reals. Solorz. de Jure Ind. vol. II. lib. iii. c. 25. According to Chilton, an English merchant who resided long in the Spanish settlements, the bull of Cruzado bore an higher price in the year 1570, being then sold for four reals at the lowest. Hakluyt, vol. III. The price seems to have varied at different periods. That exacted for the bulls issued in the last *Predicacion* will appear from the following table, exhibited by Dr. Robertson, which will also give some idea of the proportional numbers of the different classes of citizens in New Spain and Peru.

There were issued for New Spain,		
Bulls at 10 pesos each	—	4
at 2 pesos each	—	22,601
at 1 peso each	—	164,220
at 2 reals each	—	2,462,500
		<hr/> 2,649,325
For Peru,		
at 16 pesos $4\frac{1}{2}$ reals each	—	14,202
at 3 pesos 5 reals each	—	78,822
at 1 peso $5\frac{1}{2}$ reals	—	410,325
at 4 reals	—	668, 01
at 3 reals	—	<hr/> 1,171,953

† As Villa Segnor, to whom we are indebted for this information was accountant-general in one of the most considerable departments of the royal revenue, and by that means had access to proper information, his testimony with respect to this point merits great credit. Theat. Mex. vol. I.

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we conclude, that the net public revenue of Spain raised in America, does not exceed a million and an half sterling *. This falls far short of the immense sums, to which suppositions founded on conjecture have raised the Spanish revenue in America. It is remarkable, however, upon one account, Spain and Portugal are the only European powers who derive a direct revenue from their colonies, as their quota towards defraying the general expence of government. All the advantage that accrues to other nations, from their American dominions, arises from the exclusive enjoyment of their trade : but Spain, besides this, has brought her colonies to contribute to increase the power of the state ; and in return for protection, to bear a proportional share of the common burden. Such was the purpose of Britain, now ingloriously relinquished †.

* The following calculation is given by Dr. Robertson, as the the total amount of the public revenue of Spain from America and the Philippines.

	Pef. fuert.
Alcavalas (Excise) and Aduanas (Customs) &c.	2,500,000
Duties on gold and silver	3,000,000
Bull of Cruzado	1,000,000
Tribute of the Indians	2,000,000
By sale of quicksilver	300,000
Paper exported on the king's account, and sold in the royal warehouses	300,000
Stamped paper, tobacco, and other small duties	1,000,000
Duty on coinage	300,000
From the trade of Acapulco and the coasting trade from province to province	500,000
Affiento of negroes	200,000
From the trade of Mathè, or herb of Paraguay, formerly monopolized by the Jesuits	50,000
From other revenues formerly belonging to that order, in different parts of America	400,000
Total	12,000,000
In sterling money	£. 2,700,000
Deduct half, as the expence of administration, and there remains net free revenue	1,350,000

† The author here alludes to the Conciliatory Act. He is far, however, from insinuating that the parliament of Great-Britain has a right to tax her American colonies : that matter we shall afterwards have occasion to consider ; but it is inglorious in a great people to renounce any claim which they have taken up arms to assert, unless reduced to it by the unavoidable fortune of war.

A MAP of BRASIL

From the best Authorities by M.B.*****



C H A P. IV.

The Settlements of the Portuguese in Brazil.

CHAP. IV.

UNDER the name of Brazil is comprehended an immense territory in South America, bounded on the north by the river of the Amazons, on the south by Paraguay and Rio de la Plata, on the west by the ridge of the Andes, which divide it from Peru, and on the east by the Atlantic Ocean. The extent of the sea-coast is supposed to be no less than twelve hundred leagues. The interior country is too little known to enable us to form any estimate of its extent. The climate towards the north is variable, hot, boisterous, and unwholesome; but towards the south the air is as serene and healthful as in any part of the world, the country being refreshed with the soft breezes of the ocean on one hand, and the cool breath of the mountains on the other.

The manner in which Brazil was discovered, in the last year of the fifteenth century, by Pedro Alvarez Cabral, who took possession of it for the crown of Portugal, and continued his voyage to India, after dispatching a ship to Lisbon with the news of this fortunate accident, has been already related*. The favourable opinion which Cabral had formed of the country was confirmed by other navigators; but as no mines of gold or silver were there at first discovered, the attempts to establish a colony were as feeble as they were ill directed. Two ships were sent annually to Brazil to bring home parrots and woods for the dyers and cabinet-makers; and these ships carried thither from Portugal, criminals and prostitutes†. Thus an evil disposition was blended with the first principles of the colony, which made the settlement of the country infinitely difficult by the disorders inseparable from such people, and the offence which they gave the natives.

India in those days attracted all the attention of the Portuguese. It was the road to fortune, to power, and to fame. The great exploits of the nation in the East, and the wealth brought from that quarter, inflamed the imagination of every one: the enthusiasm was general. No person went voluntarily to America; but fortunately for Brazil, those unhappy men whom the inquisition had doomed to destruction, were added to the convicts already transported thither. By the united industry of these exiles, who procured from the island of Madeira slips of the sugar-cane, which they cultivated with great care, at the same time that they defended themselves against the natives, by dividing the colony into captainships, sugar, which had hitherto been used only in medicine, by reason of its scarcity, was furnished in such plenty as to become an article of luxury. The rich and great were every where eager to procure themselves this new species of indulgence; a taste which proved extremely favourable to Brazil, and enabled it to extend its sugar plantations. The court of Lisbon, notwithstanding its pre-

* Book I. chap. ii. p. 33, 34.

† Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIV.

BOOK II. judges, began to be sensible, that a colony might become beneficial to the mother-country without producing gold or silver. It now looked with less contempt on an immense region, which chance had thrown in its way, and which it had long considered as a place only fit to receive the refuse of the kingdom.

Brazil which had hitherto been left to the capricious management of the settlers, was now thought to deserve some kind of attention. Thomas de Sousa, a man of abilities, was accordingly sent thither in 1549, by John III. in quality of governor, with orders to build a city, to which he gave the name of San Salvador. Sousa began with reducing the desperate herd, who composed the greater part of the colony, into a state of proper subordination, and bringing their scattered plantations closer together. He next applied himself to acquire some information respecting the natives, with whom he knew he must be continually engaged either in traffic or war. It was no easy matter to accomplish this. Brazil was full of small nations, some of which inhabited the forests; others lived in the plains, and along the rivers. Some had settled habitations, but the greater number led a roving life. Most of them had no intercourse with each other. Those who were not divided by hostilities, were so by hereditary hatred and jealousy. Some lived by hunting and fishing, others by agriculture. All these causes must have produced a very sensible difference not only in the occupations but the customs of the several nations, and yet their general character was nearly the same.

The Brazilians are commonly of the same stature with the Europeans, tho' less robust. They are subject to few distempers, and it is no uncommon thing among them for a man to live upwards of an hundred years. Originally they wore no cloathing, but since they have formed a correspondence with the Portuguese, they generally cover the middle of their bodies. The ornaments of the two sexes are different, tho' those of both are sufficiently fanciful to suit the female character. The men wear their hair extremely long, the women theirs quite short; the women wear bracelets of bones of a beautiful white, the men necklaces of the same; the women paint their faces, the men their bodies*. In ancient times the food of the Brazilians was very simple. It might have been expected to become more varied, after their acquaintance with our domestic animals, yet those who live by the sea continue to feed upon the shell-fish which they pick up on the shore. Along the rivers they still live by fishing, and in the forests by hunting. When those precarious provisions fail, they feed upon such roots as either grow spontaneously or require but little culture. They are averse from all labour, and pass their life in a continual round of gaiety, dancing, eating, and drinking†.

This gaiety is not damped by any gloomy apprehensions of futurity; for though the Brazilians appear to have some rude idea of a supreme Being, by their occasional ejaculations to the sun and moon, and also of a state after death, where they shall revisit their relations‡, they are perfect strangers to the doctrine of

* Voyage de Lery. Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIII.

† Voyages de Correal.

‡ Id. ibid.

rewards and punishments. They have neither temples nor sacrifices. In a word, they are less under the influence of superstition than any people upon the face of the earth; and their ideas of government are no less faint than those of religion. They cannot conceive that any person can have the audacity to command, much less that any one should be so weak as to obey. Hence they have neither kings nor chiefs: they know no distinction of ranks; but they honour those whom years and experience have rendered respectable. They consult these fathers relative to all deliberations of a public nature; and they chuse for their leader in war, the man who has killed the greatest number of his enemies*. But though they seemingly live without laws or government, dissensions are seldom heard of in their little societies. If drunkenness, however, or any unfortunate accident should occasion a quarrel, and some life be lost, the murderer is delivered up to the relations of the deceased, who instantly sacrifice him to their vengeance. Then both families meet, and their reconciliation is sealed by a joyous and noisy festivity†.

The Brazilians, who thus live in the most unlimited freedom of the savage state, like other barbarians, shew no attachment to their native place. The love of our country, which is a ruling passion in civilized states, which in good governments rises to enthusiasm, and in bad ones grows habitual, is but a factitious sentiment arising from society, and unknown in the state of nature. The moral life of the savage, is the very reverse of that of the civilized man. The latter enjoys the gifts of nature unmixed, only in his infancy. As his strength increases, and his understanding unfolds itself, he loses sight of the present, and is wholly intent upon the future: hence the age of passions and pleasures, the time destined by nature for enjoyment is spent in speculation and disappointment. The heart denies itself what it wishes for, laments the indulgencies it has allowed itself, and is equally tormented with its self-denials and its gratifications. Incessantly deploring that freedom which he has sacrificed, and feeling that restraint under which he lives, the civilized man looks back with regret on his earliest years, when a succession of new objects constantly awakened his curiosity, and kept his hopes alive. He recollects with pleasure the spot where he passed his infant days: the remembrance of his innocent delights endears them to his imagination, and forcibly attracts him to his native spot; whereas the savage, who enjoys, though in a more limited degree, all the pleasures and advantages peculiar to every period of his life, and does not abstain from them in expectation of greater indulgence in old age, or from any other motive except that of present danger, finds in all places, where the conveniencies of life equally abound, objects suited to his desires. He feels that the source of his pleasures is in himself, and that his country is the universe.

This digression on savage felicity naturally leads us to speak of the first social connexion. The Brazilians in general take several wives, and quit them on the smallest disgust. But notwithstanding this liberty, adultery in either sex is held in

* Voyage de Lery.

† Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIV.

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the greatest detestation, and in the woman is punished with death. Before marriage, however, women not only indulge without shame or reproach with free-men, but fathers offer their daughters to the first comer, and careſs their lovers. It ſeems to be conſidered as a kind of diſgrace to enter a virgin into the married ſtate, as ſuch a ſingularity can only be the conſequence of neglect, where all reſtraint is removed. After child-birth, the women keep their bed for a day or two; then the mother, hanging the infant to her neck in a cotton ſcarf, returns to her domeſtic occupations, without any kind of inconveniency*.

Though the Brazilians are juſtly conſidered as the moſt unfeeling ſavages in America, they receive ſtrangers with diſtinguiſhed marks of civility. As ſoon as they appear, the women croud about them, waſh their feet, and welcome them by the moſt obliging expreſſions, while the maſter of the houſe provides every thing in his power for their entertainment and accommodation: This ſpirit of hoſpitality is one of the moſt certain indications that man was born for ſociety. It is the moſt valuable diſpoſition in the ſavage ſtate; where, as it is moſt neceſſary, it is found in the higheſt perfection. The tenderneſs of the Brazilians for thoſe in diſtreſs is no leſs remarkable. They aſſiſt one another in ſickneſs with more than brotherly kindneſs; and if any one receives a wound, his neighbour immediately comes and ſucks it, and performs every other office of humanity with the ſame readineſs. They do not neglect the uſe of the healing plants, with which their foreſts and mountains abound; but, in moſt caſes, they truſt more to abſtinence than medicine, never allowing the ſick to taſte any food †.

Far from ſhewing that indifference or weakneſs, which makes us ſhun the dead, and unwilling to ſpeak of them, or remain in the place that might recall their image to our minds, the Brazilians behold their dead with tender emotions, recount their exploits with complacency, and celebrate their virtues with tranſport. They are buried upright in a round grave; and if the deceaſed was the head of a family, his plumes, his necklace, and his arms are buried with him. When a tribe removes to another place, which often happens merely for the ſake of changing, every family fixes ſome remarkable ſtones over the graves of their moſt reſpectable relations; and thoſe ſavages never approach theſe monuments of ſorrow, without breaking out into dreadful outcries, not unlike the ſhouts with which they make the air reſound, when they are ruſhing to battle ‡.

Motives of intereſt or ambition have never prompted the Brazilians to take up arms. Their wars are occaſioned only by a deſire of avenging the death of their friends or relations. To theſe hoſtilities they are animated by the ſeniors of the tribe, who are always conſulted on ſuch occaſions; who give the ſignal for arming, and exert themſelves during the march in animating the young men to deeds of heroiſm. Sometimes the progreſs of the army is even ſuſpended, in order to liſten to thoſe paſſionate harangues, which often laſt for many hours. The

* Voyage de Lery.

† Hiſt. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIV.

‡ Id. ibid.

combatants are armed with a club of ebony, six feet long, one foot broad, and an inch thick. They have bows of the same wood, which they use with much dexterity. Their instruments of martial music are flutes, commonly made of the leg bones of their enemies. When they arrive on an enemy's frontier, the women, who carry the provisions, halt, while the warriors advance through the woods. The attack is never made openly. They conceal themselves at some distance from the habitations of those on whom they design to wreak their fury, and there watch an opportunity of surprising them: they wait the approach of darkness; set fire to the huts; and avail themselves of the confusion which that occasions to perpetrate their cruelties, which know no bounds. If they are discovered, and routed by superior force, they hide themselves in the deepest recesses of the woods; divide into parties, and lie in ambush. Their courage seldom consists in maintaining their ground*.

The ambition of the Brazilians is to make a multitude of prisoners. These are brought home to the village of the conquerors, where they are slain and eaten with much solemnity. The feast lasts a long time, and during the continuance of it, the old men exhort the young to become intrepid warriors, that they may extend the glory of their nation, and often procure themselves such an honourable repast. This inclination for human flesh, however, is never so prevalent as to induce the Brazilians to devour such of their enemies as have fallen in battle: they only eat those who have been taken alive, and put to death with certain ceremonies†. It should seem as if the rancour of revenge alone could give a relish for food that human nature abhors.

The treatment of prisoners of war has every where varied according to the degree of perfection that human reason has attained. The most civilized nations ransom them, exchange, or restore them, at the conclusion of a war. Nations less completely civilized, claim them as a property, and sell them for slaves, or use them as such. The common barbarians massacre them, without torturing them; and the most ferocious savages torture, kill, and eat them. This is their law of war. The Brazilians do not torture their prisoners: they have recourse to a more refined species of cruelty, which deserves to be particularly described.

The captive is conducted in triumph to the village of the victorious tribe, and lodged in the house of his conqueror, where he is kindly entertained, and attached to life by the most luxurious indulgences. He is not only treated with delicious foods, but fine women are furnished him for the gratification of his sensuality. He is even permitted the amusements of hunting and fishing. Meanwhile his doom is irrevocably fixed, though the time is left uncertain. When the fatal day arrives, the in-

* Id. *ibid.* Voy. de Lery. This description, as we shall afterwards have occasion to see, is alike applicable to the natives both of North and South America; who are not more distinguished from the Europeans by their copper colour, and the want of a beard, than by their mode of making war, and their inferiority to our barbarous ancestors in active courage.

† Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIV.

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habitants of the village are invited to a feast: they spend several hours in dancing and drinking; and the prisoner is not only among the number of the guests, but though acquainted with the cause of the meeting, though not ignorant of his approaching fate, he affects to distinguish himself by his gaiety. After the dance, two strong men lay hold of him, without his making the smallest resistance, or discovering any signs of fear. They tie a rope about his waist, but leave his hands free, and in that condition lead him through the neighbouring villages. Far from seeming dejected, he views the spectators with a firm countenance: he recounts to them his exploits in a tone of exultation; particularly how often he has led in triumph those of their nation, and feasted on their flesh. After he has served for some time as a spectacle, and received the insults and injuries which are inflicted on such occasions, the two guards retire, one towards the right, the other towards the left, to the distance of eight or ten feet, each keeping hold of the rope. An heap of stones are then laid at the prisoner's feet; and the guards, covering themselves, with their shields, declare to him, that, before his death, he is permitted to take his revenge. He then lifts the stones, and throws them with fury against those that surround him; and how quickly soever they may retire, they never escape without several wounds. When he has thrown all his stones, the person from whom he is to receive his doom, and who has not appeared before on the scene, advances with his club in his hand, and his head adorned with the most beautiful plumes. He holds some discourse with the captive, and this short conversation closes the accusation and the sentence. He asks the destined victim, if it is true that he has killed and eaten several of their countrymen. The prisoner glories in a prompt confession, and even sets his executioner at defiance, in a form of words very energetic in the language of the country. "Restore me to liberty!"—says he, "and I will eat thee and thine."—"Well!" replies the executioner, "we will prevent you. I come to terminate your fate, and you shall be eaten this day." The blow immediately follows this menace. The moment the captive falls, the woman who last shared his caresses, runs to the body throws herself upon it, and weeps there a moment. This affected sorrow, however, does not prevent her from eating part of the unhappy man whom she had cherished. The other women advance, seize the body, and dress it for the feast, besmearing their children with the blood, in order to inspire them early with a hatred of their enemies*.

The heads of the dead are carefully preserved by the Brazilians in heaps, and shewn to all strangers as monuments of victory and valour. They also preserve carefully the leg and thigh bones, of which, as already observed, they make their warlike flutes or fifes, and all the teeth, which, they suspend round their necks in the form of beads. Those who have taken several prisoners, and think their reputation sufficiently established, make incisions in their breast, their arms, their thighs, and in the calf their legs, to preserve the memory of their exploits†. These, which procure them respect from their countrymen, are no golden or

* Voyage de Lery,

† Id. ibid.

filken ornaments, of which an enemy can deprive them. But it is accounted still more honourable to be disfigured in battle. Among those savages a man may be said to rise in esteem in proportion as he is mangled with wounds.

Such manners did not dispose the Brazilians to submit tamely to the yoke which the Portuguese wanted to impose upon them. At first, they only declined all intercourse with the invaders of their country; but finding themselves afterwards pursued in order to be made slaves, and employed in the labours of the field, they took the resolution of murdering all the Europeans, wherever they could seize them. The friends and relations of the natives that were taken also ventured to make frequent attempts to rescue them, and were sometimes successful. This brought an increase of enemies against the Portuguese, who were forced to attend, as already noticed, to the double occupation of labour and of war. Soufa did not bring forces sufficient materially to change the situation of affairs. By building San Salvador, he indeed gave a centre to the colony, but the honour of settling, extending, and making it really useful to the mother-country, was reserved for the Jesuits who attended him.

Those intrepid men, who have always been prompted by motives of religion or ambition to undertake the greatest designs, dispersed themselves among the Indians. Such of the missionaries as were murdered from the hatred of the Portuguese name, were immediately replaced by others, who appeared to be inspired only with sentiments of peace and charity. This magnanimity confounded the barbarians, who had never possessed any idea of forgiveness. By degrees they began to place some confidence in men who seemed to seek them only with a view of making them happy. Their attachment for their missionaries grew up into a passionate fondness. When a Jesuit was expected in one of their nations, the young people flocked to meet him, concealing themselves in the woods along the road. As he drew near they sallied forth, played upon their pipes, beat their drums, danced, and made the air resound with joyful songs. They omitted nothing, in a word, that could express their satisfaction. At the entrance of the village the old men and chief inhabitants were assembled, who expressed as much joy, but with more sedateness. A little farther on stood the women and young girls, in a respectful posture, suitable to their sex. Then they all joined, and conducted the father in triumph to the place where they were accustomed to hold their assemblies. There he instructed them in the fundamental principles of religion; exhorted them to regularity of manners, to a love of justice, brotherly kindness, charity, and to an abhorrence of human blood. After this he baptised them*.

As the Jesuits were too few in number to transact all the business themselves, they frequently deputed some of the most intelligent natives in their stead. Proud of so honourable an office, these Indians distributed hatchets, knives, and looking-glasses among the savages they met with, and represented the Portuguese as an harmless, humane, and good sort of people. They never returned from their

* Tresor de P. Jarric.

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excursions without bringing with them some of their countrymen, who followed them from motives of curiosity. When those savages had once seen the Jesuits, it was with difficulty that they ever quitted them. If they returned home, it was to invite their families and friends to come and share their happiness, and to display the presents they had received *.

Should any one be inclined to doubt these happy effects of kindness and humanity over savage nations, let him only compare the progress which the Jesuits have made, in a short time, in South America, with what the fleets and armies of Spain and Portugal have not been able to effect in the course of two centuries. While multitudes of soldiers were employed in changing two populous and civilized empires into deserts, inhabited chiefly by roving savages, a few missionaries have changed little wandering tribes into great and civilized nations. If these active and courageous men had been less infected with the spirit of the church of Rome; if when formed into a society in the most intriguing and corrupt court of Europe, they had not insinuated themselves into other courts to influence all political events; if the chiefs of the society had not made an ill use of the very virtues of its members, the Old and New World would still have reaped the advantage of the labours of a set of men, who might have been made useful had they been prevented from being necessary, and the eighteenth century would not have had occasion to be ashamed of the enormities that have attended the suppression of the Order of Jesus.

The Brazilians had too much cause of hatred against the Europeans, not to mistrust their kindness. But this diffidence was in some measure removed by a signal act of justice. The Portuguese had formed the settlement of St. Vincent on the sea coast, in the twenty-fourth degree of south latitude. There they traded peaceably with the Cariges, the mildest and most civilized nation in all Brazil. The advantages which they reaped from this intercourse could not restrain them from seizing upon seventy of the Cariges, in order to make slaves of them. The person who had committed the offence, was condemned to carry the prisoners back to the place whence they had been taken, and to make the proper excuses for so heinous an insult. Two Jesuits, who were employed to dispose the Indians to accept of this satisfaction, which would never have been offered but at their desire, gave notice of their commission to Farnacaha, the most respectable man of his nation. He came out to meet them, and embracing them with tears of joy, "My fathers," said he, "we consent to forgive all that is past, and to enter into a fresh alliance with the Portuguese; but let them for the future be more moderate and more observant of the rights of nations. Our attachment entitles us at least to equitable proceedings. We are called barbarians, yet we respect justice and our friends."

The missionaries having engaged, that, for the future, their nation should religiously observe the laws of peace and amity, Farnacaha proceeded thus:—"If you doubt the faith of the Cariges, I will give you a proof

* Id. *ibid.*

of it. I have a nephew for whom I have a great affection; he is the hope of my family, and the comfort of his mother: she would die of grief if she should lose her son. Yet I will deliver him to you as an hostage. Take him along with you; cultivate his young mind; take care of his education, and instruct him in your religion. Let his manners be gentle and pure. I hope, when you return, you will instruct me also, and enlighten my mind." Many of the Cariges followed the example of Faranaha, and sent their children to St. Vincent's for education. The Jesuits were too artful not to take advantage of this circumstance; but it does not appear that they ever had any intention to enslave the Indians, by inculcating submission. Avarice had not yet possessed the minds of these missionaries, and the interest they had at court secured sufficient respect in the colony at once to gratify their ambition, and to make the situation of their converts a comfortable one.

This season of tranquillity was improved to the advantage of the sugar-trade, by means of the slaves procured from Africa. No sooner had the Portuguese established settlements on that coast than they brought away a great number of negroes, who were employed by the mother-country in domestic services as well as in clearing the lands. That practice, one of the first which contributed to corrupt the character of the nation, was introduced much later into the American settlements, where it was not established till the year 1530. The number of negroes was now much increased in Brazil; and if the natives did not share their labours, they did not obstruct them. They rather encouraged them, by devoting themselves voluntarily to the culture of the earth, and supplying the settlement with the means of subsistence. This harmony was productive of great advantages.

The prosperity of the Portuguese colony, which was visible in all the markets of Europe, excited the envy of the French. They attempted to make settlements successively at Rio Janeiro, Rio Grande, Paraiba, and the island of Maragnon; but their levity would not permit them to wait the usually slow progress of infant establishments; and merely from inconstancy and impatience, they gave up prospects that were sufficient to have encouraged any other nation to persevere. France has, however, derived one advantage from these fruitless invasions; namely, the honour of making mankind acquainted with the character of the Brazilians, in regard to which we should otherwise have remained in perfect ignorance, as the jealousy of the Portuguese government, like that of Spain, excludes all foreigners from their settlements, and they have thrown no light upon that subject themselves. The following dialogue, in which Lery, to whom we have already been so much indebted for information, was an interlocutor, is a valuable monument of the natural good sense of those savages, notwithstanding the barbarity of their manners.

The Brazilians being greatly surprised to see the French take so much pains to procure their wood, one of their old men said to Lery, "What reason can induce you Frenchmen to come so far to get wood for firing?—Is there none in your own country?"—"Yes," replied Lery, "and a great deal too, but not such as yours, which we do not burn, but in the same manner as your people employ

A. D. 1555.

it, to dye their plumes and bow-strings, ours also use it in dying."—"Likely," said the Brazilian;—"but do you require so great a quantity?"—"Yes," replied Lery; "for in our country there are some merchants who have more red and scarlet cloth than all you ever saw here. One of these will buy several cargoes of this wood."—"Ha!"—said the Brazilian, "thou tellest me wonders." Then pausing a little upon the information he had received, his curiosity operated thus:—"but this rich man, of whom thou talkest, is he never to die?"—"Yes, yes," said Lery, "as well as others;"—on which the Brazilian inquired, to whom all his wealth belonged when he was dead. "It goes," replied Lery, "to his children; or if he has none, to his brothers, sisters, or nearest of kin."—"Truly," concluded the Brazilian, "I now perceive that you Frenchmen are great fools. Must you work so hard, and cross the seas to heap up riches for those that come after you, as if the earth that has fed you were not sufficient to feed them also!—We have children and relations whom we love, as thou seest; but as we are sure that after our death the earth which has provided for our subsistence will likewise provide for theirs, we give ourselves no concern about the matter*."

This mode of reasoning, so natural to savages, who have few wants, but so repugnant to the ideas of civilized nations who have experienced the new train of desires excited by luxury and avarice, was not likely to make any impression upon the French. They were inflamed with that love of riches, which, in those days, made all the maritime powers of Europe attempt establishments in the New World. The Dutch, who were become republicans from persecution, and merchants from necessity, were more persevering, and in consequence of that, more successful than the French in their attempts upon Brazil. Other causes, however, conspired to favour their designs.

The Portuguese, in the very meridian of their prosperity, when in possession of a prodigious commerce, and an extensive empire on the coast of Africa, in Arabia, India, the isles of Asia, and in one of the most valuable parts of America, were struck down by one of those unexpected blows, which, in a critical moment, decide the fate of nations. Don Sebastian, one of their greatest princes, in an unfortunate expedition against the Moors of Barbary, perished with the flower of his kingdom, in 1581. In consequence of that event, the Portuguese fell under the dominion of Spain. Nor was this their only misfortune. The inhabitants of the Low Countries, whom the tyranny and cruelty of Philip II. had excited to revolt, and who had thrown off the Spanish yoke with indignation, not satisfied with erecting themselves into a free state, and supporting their independency by a successful defensive war, but flushed with the juvenile ardour of a growing commonwealth, pursued the Spaniards into the remotest recesses of their extensive dominions, and grew rich and powerful by the spoils of their former masters. They chiefly fell upon the Portuguese possessions in the East-Indies, not sufficiently defended by the inert policy of the court of Spain, and

* Voyage de Lery.

made themselves masters of almost all the settlements of that depressed nation in Asia. They now began to turn their eyes towards America, and the truce of 1629 gave them time to bring their new designs to maturity.

These designs were manifested in 1621 by the establishment of a West India company, from which the same success was expected in Africa and America, both comprehended in the charter, as the East India company had experienced in Asia. The capital of this company was five hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds. Holland furnished four ninths, Zealand two; the Maese and West Friesland each one ninth, and East Friesland and Groningen together one. The general meeting was to be held at Amsterdam six years successively, and then two years at Middleburg. But the West India company dissatisfied that their privileges were not so extensive as those of the East India company, were in no haste to begin operations. The states put them on the same footing in 1624, and then they made an attack on Brazil.

This enterprise was committed to Jacob Willekens. Precautions had been taken to procure the necessary informations. Some Dutch ships had ventured to visit Brazil, in defiance of the law that prohibited the admittance of strangers. As they greatly undersold, according to the custom of their country, the commodities that came from Spain or Portugal, they met with a favourable reception. At their return they reported, that the colony was in a kind of anarchy; that foreign dominion had stifled in the breasts of the Portuguese the love of their country; that self-interest had corrupted their minds; that the soldiers were turned merchants; that they had forgot the first principles of war; and that whoever should there appear with a competent force, would infallibly surmount the trifling obstacles that might be opposed to the conquest of that wealthy region. Willekens furnished with this intelligence, stood directly for the Bay of All Saints. San Salvador, the capital, betrayed by the cowardice of the governor, surrendered on the appearance of the Dutch fleet. Don Michael de Texeira, the archbishop, alone supported the honour of his nation. Believing that in such an emergency, the service of his country superseded the common obligations of his function, he took arms; and at the head of his clergy, and a few scattered forces, attempted to set bounds to the progress of the conquerors. The Dutch, however, found an immense booty in San Salvador, and in a short time made themselves masters of the whole captainship of Bahia, (by which name the capital is also sometimes called) the largest and richest province in Brazil*.

The news of this loss threw Portugal into the utmost consternation; but the Spanish ministry were rather pleased than discomposed by it: they were comforted for the triumph obtained by the most inveterate enemies of their country, by reflecting on the mortification which the Portuguese must experience, in consequence of that event. Ever since the Spaniards had given a sovereign to this unfortunate people, they had met with an opposition in their tyrannies which

* Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. VIII. XIV.

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offended the haughty spirit of their despotic government. An event that might reduce the pride of Portugal, and render her more tractable, appeared therefore to them a fortunate circumstance. But though Philip IV. had harboured these base sentiments, he thought the majesty of his throne required of him some outward demonstrations of resentment and vengeance. He accordingly wrote to the Portuguese of the first rank, exhorting them to make such vigorous efforts as the present exigencies required. This they were already inclined to, as most of them had possessions in Brazil. Self-interest, patriotism, the desire of throwing a damp upon the joy of their tyrants, all concurred to quicken their alacrity. The monied men lavished their treasures; others, who had more influence than wealth, raised troops: every one was eager to enter into the service. In a few months twenty-six ships were fitted out, and sailed in the beginning of the year 1626, in company with those from Spain, which the slow and crooked policy of that court had made them wait for by much too long. They were commanded by the marquis de Valduesa, and arrived safe in the bay of All Saints.

The Dutch since the conquest of Bahia had suffered many hardships in San Salvador. The archbishop, at the head of fifteen hundred men, had often defeated their parties, had cut off their provisions, and held them closely blocked up, when death put a period to his generous efforts. This misfortune, however, produced no revolution in favour of the Dutch, who continued in the same situation, till the arrival of the united fleets of Spain and Portugal. They disembarked four thousand men, under the command of Don Manuel de Menzes. Little force was necessary to reduce a place already fatigued with a long siege. The governor would have attempted resistance, but the garrison obliged him to capitulate *.

The success of the West India company by sea made amends for this loss. Their ships never came into port, but when loaded with the spoils of the Spaniards and Portuguese. Their prosperity was so great as to give umbrage even to the powers most interested in the welfare of Holland. The ocean was covered with their fleets. Their admirals endeavoured by useful exploits to preserve their confidence. The inferior officers aspired to promotion by seconding the valour and skill of their commanders. The soldiers and sailors fought with unparalled ardour. Nothing could discourage these resolute and intrepid men: the fatigues of a seafaring life, sickness, and repeated engagements, seemed only to inure them to war, and to increase their emulation. The company encouraged this fervid spirit, by frequently distributing rewards. Exclusive of their pay, the sailors were allowed to carry on a private trade, which proved a great encouragement, and procured a constant supply of men. As by this wise regulation their interest was immediately connected with that of their employers, they wished to be always in action: they never struck to the enemy, nor ever failed to attack their ships with that degree of skill, intrepidity, and persevering courage, which must always insure success.

* Hist. Ger. des Voyages, tom. XIV.

This prosperity emboldened the West India company to make a second attack on Brazil. Henry Lonk, the Dutch admiral, appeared on the coast of Farnambucca in the beginning of the year 1630, with forty-six ships of war. Thierry of Wardenburg, who commanded the land forces, disembarked with two thousand four hundred men, and made himself master of the city of Olinda, after an obstinate resistance. An advantage so important spread terror over the whole country, and the Dutch took advantage of it to reduce the rest of the captainship. The Portuguese made a vigorous but ineffectual effort, the year following, to expell the invaders. The Dutch not only kept possession of Farnambucca, but subdued the captainships of Tamaraca, Paraiba, and Rio Grande, in the years 1633, 1634, and 1635. All these furnished annually a large quantity of sugar, a great deal of wood for dying, and other valuable commodities.

The Dutch were so much elated with the acquisition of this wealth, which now flowed to Amsterdam instead of Lisbon, that they determined to conquer all Brazil, and intrusted Maurice of Nassau with the conduct of that enterprise. Maurice reached the place of his destination in the beginning of the year 1637. He found the soldiers so well disciplined, the officers men of such experience, and so much ardour in every one to engage, that he immediately took the field. He was successively opposed by Banjola, Rocca de Borgia, and the famous Brazilian Cameron, the idol of his people, who was passionately fond of the Portuguese; brave, active, cautious, he wanted no qualification of a great general but a scientific knowledge of the art of war. These several commanders exerted their utmost efforts to defend the places under their protection; but their endeavours proved ineffectual. The Dutch reduced the captainships of Sierra, Seregippe, and the greater part of Bahia. Seven of the fourteen provinces, into which Brazil is divided, had already submitted to them; and they flattered themselves, that one or two campaigns more would make them masters of all the possessions of their enemies in that part of America, when an unexpected revolution gave a new turn to affairs.

A. D. 1640.

The Portuguese had never borne with patience the yoke of Spain, which every thing conspired to render grievous to them. Philip II. alike cruel, avaricious, and despotic, had endeavoured vilify them, that he might have a pretext for his oppressions. His son, Philip III. who too closely followed his maxims, and thought it better to reign over a ruined nation than be indebted to their good will for submission, had suffered them, as we have seen, to be deprived of a multitude of conquests, which had proved a source of riches, power, and glory to them, and which they had acquired by much effusion of blood. Philip IV. the successor of that weak prince, and who had still less understanding than his father, openly and contemptuously attacked their administration, their privileges, their manners, and every thing that was most dear to them. Those repeated outrages united all the Portuguese, whom Spain had been labouring to divide. A conspiracy which had been forming for three years with incredible secrecy, broke out in December 1640, when the Spanish ministers were expelled Lisbon, and the

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duke of Braganza placed on the throne of his ancestors. The example of the capital was followed by that of the whole kingdom, and by all that remained of the settlements formed in happier times in Asia, Africa, and America.

John IV. thenew king, united his interests and his resentments with those of the English, the French, and all the enemies of Spain. On the twenty third day of June 1641, he concluded in particular an offensive and defensive alliance with the United Provinces for Europe, and ten years truce for the East and West Indies, during which period each party was to retain what was then in their possession. Some misunderstanding, however, arose relative to this article of the treaty. The Dutch, under different pretexs, refused to restore certain places taken after the time mentioned in the truce; and the king of Portugal, piqued at that conduct, took the resolution of permitting his subjects in Brazil to act for their own and his interest, without seeming to take any part in their proceedings. His officers accordingly affected to live in perfect harmony with their new allies. Nassau was recalled, together with the greater part of his troops, as an unnecessary charge to the company, and the government of the Dutch possessions in Brazil was committed to Hamel, a merchant of Amsterdam; to Bassis, a goldsmith of Harlem; and Bullestraat, a carpenter of Middleburg*.

In the council formed by this triumvirate resided all authority, and their administration was such as might have been expected from men of their condition. They readily entered into the œconomical views of the company. Their own inclinations even led them to push these views to a blameable excess. They suffered the fortifications already too much neglected, to go to decay; they sold arms and ammunition to the Portuguese, who paid them such an exorbitant price for these articles as ought to have awakened their jealousy; and they granted to all the soldiers who desired it, leave to return to Europe. Their whole ambition, in a word, was to amass wealth by gaining and saving, and by these means to increase the profits of their constituents. In this conduct they were confirmed by the applause which they received from the avaricious and weak men, who were intrusted with the direction of the company's affairs. With a view to increase still farther the profits of their countrymen, they began to oppress such of the Portuguese as resided under their government. Tyranny made rapid progress; and was at last carried to that excess, which is an excuse for all kinds of measures, and inspires the most desperate purposes.

The victims of these proceedings, who had secret assurances of protection from the court, wasted no time in complaints. In 1645, the boldest of them united to take revenge. Their design was to massacre all the Dutch, who had any share in the government, at an entertainment in the city of Maurice, the new capital of Farnambucca; and then to attack the people, who suspecting no danger, would be unable to resist their fury. The plot was discovered, but the conspirators had time to leave the town, and retire to a place of safety†. Their chief, named Antonio Calvalcante, was a Portuguese of obscure birth. From

* Le Cler, *Hist. des Provinces Unies.*

† Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIV.

a common servant, he had risen to the rank of an agent, and afterwards become a merchant. His abilities had enabled him to acquire a large fortune; his probity had gained him universal confidence, and his generosity had procured him an infinite number of friends, who were inviolably attached to his interest.

Cavalcante was not discouraged by the disappointment he had met with. Acquainted with the wishes of his countrymen, as well as with the weakness of government, he ventured to commence hostilities without consulting the court. His name, his virtues, and his views, assembled the Brazilians, the Portuguese soldiers, and even the colonists about him. He inspired them with his own ardour, his activity, and his courage. They determined to conquer or to die with him. He ravaged the territories of the Dutch; he was frequently victorious in skirmishes; but he did not allow himself to slumber over his success. Some checks which he met with, served only to display the firmness of his spirit, the extent of his capacity, and the elevation of his mind. He assumed a threatening aspect even after a disaster, and appeared yet more formidable by his perseverance than by his intrepidity. Though never publicly supported by government, he spread such terror among his enemies, that they dared no longer keep the field. At that period of his glory, the purpose of his generous efforts was in danger of being defeated, and all the blood spilt during a struggle of ten years of being considered as a libation to the prosperity of the United Provinces.

The Dutch had frequently complained of the hostilities in Brazil, and the court of Portugal had as often disavowed them, and even declared that it would one day punish the authors of these disturbances. As the republic was then engaged in a war with England, some regard was paid to those evasive answers; but no sooner did any prospect of peace appear, than effectual measures were taken by the Dutch for humbling the Portuguese both in Europe and America. John IV. unwilling to risk the issue of a war with such a powerful people, exerted himself in earnest to put an end to the hostilities in Brazil. Cavalcante, who had now no resource for the completion of his designs but in his fortune, his interest, and his abilities, did not even deliberate whether he should obey. "If the king," said he, "were but informed of our zeal and our success, and acquainted with his own interest, far from disarming us, he would encourage us to pursue our undertaking, and would support us with all his power." In consequence of this way of thinking, he determined to hasten his operations, lest the ardour of his companions should abate. Accordingly he made a last effort, and with the assistance of Baretto, Vidal, and some others, who were able and willing to serve their country, he completed the ruin of the Dutch. Such of these republicans as escaped the sword and famine, evacuated Brazil agreeable to a capitulation signed on the twenty-eighth day of January, 1654.

The peace concluded three months after, between England and the United Provinces, seemed to put the latter in a condition to recover a valuable possession, which had been lost by an ill judged parsimony, accompanied with an unfortunate concurrence of circumstances. But both the republic and the West India company disappointed the general expectation: no attempt was made for
that

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that purpose; and the treaty which adjusted the claims of the contending powers in 1661, secured to Portugal the sole possession of Brazil, in consideration of the sum of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, which that crown engaged to pay to the United Provinces*. Thus did the Dutch part with a conquest, which might have become the richest of all the European colonies in the New World, and which would have given the republic a degree of consequence it can never acquire from its own territory, nor even from its possessions in the East Indies.

As soon as the Portuguese were entirely freed from the Dutch, they employed themselves in putting Brazil into better order than it had hitherto been, even before the war. The first step taken for this purpose was to regulate the condition of such of the natives as had either already submitted, or might hereafter be reduced to subjection. Upon an attentive examination it was found, that the accounts which represented these savages as impatient of any controul, were without foundation. The first impression made upon them by the sight of the Europeans, was a sense of danger mingled with diffidence. The conduct of the Portuguese confirmed their suspicions, and rendered them ferocious. The difficulty of understanding one another gave still more frequent occasion for animosity on both sides. If, on more mature acquaintance, the Brazilians sometimes renewed their hostilities, it was commonly because they were roused to vengeance by the rapaciousness, perfidy, and cruelty of that ambitious power, which was come to disturb the peace of this part of America. On other occasions they might perhaps be charged with inadvertancy, in too hastily taking up arms from apprehensions of imaginary danger, but never with injustice or duplicity. They were always found true to their promises, to the faith of treaties, and to the sacred rights of hospitality. The just idea, which was at length entertained of their character, induced the Portuguese to collect them into villages along the coast, or some little way up the country. By this means, a communication was secured between the remote settlements of the Portuguese, and the savages, who infested the intermediate parts by their depredations, were kept at a distance.

Some missionaries, mostly Jesuits, were intrusted with the temporal and spiritual government of these new communities. Those ecclesiastics, according to the best information, were absolute tyrants†; such and as retained any sentiments of moderation or humanity, whether from indolence or superstition, kept those little societies in a state of perpetual intancy. They neither improved their understanding nor their industry beyond a certain degree: and possibly had they been ever so willing they might have found it difficult to have been more serviceable to them; for the court of Lisbon, while it exempted the Indians from all taxes, subjected them to labours of vassalage. This fatal law made them dependent on the neighbouring commandants and magistrates; who under the usual pretence adopted by men in office, of making them work for the public, too often imposed labours upon them for their own selfish purposes.

* Le Clerc, *Hist. des Prov. Unies*. *Hist. Gen. des Voyages*, tom. XIV. Aitzema, *Resolutions Secretees*, tom. II.

† Raynal, liv. ix. He made it his business to inquire particularly into this matter.

Those who were not employed for them or their spiritual directors, were generally unemployed. If they shook off their natural indolence, it was to go a-hunting or fishing, or to cultivate as much cassada as was necessary for their own subsistence. Their manufactures were confined to some cotton girdles or sashes to cover their loins, and the arrangement of a few feathers to adorn their heads. Those among them who were most industrious, procured the means of purchasing a few articles of cutlery, and other things of small value*.

Such was the fate of the Brazilians, who had submitted to the crown of Portugal, and whose number never exceeded two hundred thousand. The independent natives had little intercourse with the Portuguese, except by the captives which they sold them, or those of their number that were made such, for the purpose of servitude. A sense of mutual interest made acts of hostility less frequent between the two nations, and a total cessation of them at last took place. The Portuguese have not been molested by the natives since the year 1717, and have not molested them since 1756.

While the court of Lisbon was engaged in regulating the interior concerns of the colony, some of the subjects of Portugal were devising the means of extending it. They advanced to the south towards Rio de la Plata, and to the north as far as the Maragnon, or river of the Amazons. The Spaniards seemed to be in possession of both those rivers; the Portuguese were determined to expel them, or to share the navigation with them.

The Maragnon, no less famous for its length of course, than for that vast body of water, with which it swells the ocean, derives its common name, *the River of Amazons*, from the fabulous relation of Orellana, whom we have seen sail down it; and who, among other marvellous particulars, described a republic of female warriors as inhabiting its banks. This absurd fiction the fond credulity of the age believed; but what more particularly excited the curiosity of the Spaniards, was another circumstance in Orellana's story. He described a nation on the banks of the Maragnon, whose temples were covered with gold. In quest of this rich country, Orellana himself embarked in 1644, with four hundred men, and the title of governor over all the regions that he should conquer: but a train of disasters ruined his ships; his men perished of diseases, or were cut off by the natives; and he himself fell a victim to his own vain-glorious ambition, in attempting to realize some part of the tale that he had invented†.

The civil wars of Peru prevented any second attempt to take possession of the country bordering on the Maragnon, till the year 1560, when tranquillity being restored, Pedro de Orsua, a gentleman of Navarre, distinguished for his wisdom and valour, offered to renew the undertaking. He accordingly set out from Cuzco with seven hundred men; but these adventurers being enemies to all persons of sober character, massacred their commander, who was a man of sound morals, and zealously attached to order and regularity, and chose as their

* Id. *ibid*.

† Herrera, dec. V. lib. i. c. 4.

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leader Lopez de Aguirre, a native of Biscay. With their consent, he assumed the title of king, and being a man of a ferocious and sanguine disposition, without any sentiments of humanity, he promised them all the treasures of the New World. Inflamed with such flattering hopes, these desperate men sailed down the Maragnon into the ocean; and landing at Trinidad, murdered the governor and plundered the island. The coasts of Cumana, Caraccas, and St. Martha, were still more severely treated, because they were richer. The plunderers next penetrated into New Granada, and were advancing towards Quito and the interior parts of Peru, when they were unexpectedly attacked and dispersed by a body of troops hastily assembled. De Aguirre, their chief, seeing no way to escape, marked his despair by an atrocious action. "My child," said he, to his only daughter who attended him in this expedition, "I thought to have placed thee upon a throne, but the event has not answered my expectations. My honour and thine own will not permit thee to live, and be a slave to our enemies: die then, by a father's hand!"—Having uttered these words, he shot her through the body, and instantly put an end to her life, by plunging a dagger into her heart. His strength soon failed him, he was taken prisoner, and suffered the punishment due to his crimes*.

After these unfortunate expeditions, the river of the Amazons was entirely neglected, and seemed to be totally forgotten for half a century. Some attempts were again made to resume the discovery of the countries stretching along its banks, but with no better success than formerly. The honour of surmounting every difficulty, and acquiring an useful knowledge of that great river, was reserved for the Portuguese. They had built a town called Para, near the mouth of the river. At this place Pedro de Texeira embarked in 1638, and with a great number of canoes full of Indians and Portuguese, sailed up the stream of the Amazons, as far as the confluence of the Napo, and then up the Napo, which brought him almost to Quito, whither he proceeded by land. Notwithstanding the enmity subsisting between the Spaniards and Portuguese, though at that time subjects of the same prince, Texeira was received at Quito with the regard, esteem, and confidence, due to a man who had performed a signal service. He returned in company with de Acughna and de Artieda, two learned Jesuits, who were appointed to verify his observations, and to make others†. An accurate account of these two successful voyages was sent to the court of Madrid, where it gave rise to a very extraordinary project.

The communication between the Spanish colonies had long been found very difficult. The buccaniers at that time infested both the North and South Seas, and interrupted their navigation. Even those ships which had got to the Havanna, and joined the fleet, were not perfectly safe. The galleons were frequently attacked, and taken in whole squadrons by the Dutch; and they were always pursued by privateers, who seldom failed to carry off the straggling vessels. The river of Amazons, it was hoped, would remedy all these inconven-

* Rodriguez El Maragnon y Amazonas.

† Id. ibid.

niencies. It was thought possible, and even an easy matter, to convey thither the treasures of New Granada, Popayan, Quito, Peru, and of Chili itself, by navigable rivers, or at a small expence by land; and that coming down the river, they would find the galleons ready in the harbour of Para to receive them. The fleet from Brazil would then have joined, and consequently strengthened the fleet from Spain. They would have sailed with great security in latitudes little known or frequented, and have arrived in Europe at least with a formidable appearance. They might even have been in a condition to surmount any obstacle they could have met with; but the revolution which placed the duke of Braganza on the throne of Portugal, put an end to these important projects. Each of the two nations was then only intent upon securing to itself that part of the great river which best suited its own situation.

The Spanish Jesuits undertook to settle a mission in the country lying between the stream of the river of Amazons and that of the Napo, as low as the conflux of these two rivers. Every missionary, attended only by one man, took with him hatchets, knives, needles, and all kinds of iron tools, and penetrated into the thickest of the forests. There they spent whole days in climbing up the trees, to see if they could descry any hut, perceive any smoke, or hear the sound of any drum or pipe. When they were assured by some of these tokens that any savages were in the neighbourhood, they advanced towards them. Most of them fled; but those whom the missionary could come within reach of, were easily allured by such presents as were offered them. This was all the eloquence he had in his power, and all that he had occasion to exert. When he had assembled a few families, he led them to the spot which he had fixed upon to build a village; but they were not easily persuaded to take up their abode there. As they were accustomed to rove about, they found it an insupportable hardship to remain always in the same place. The state of savage independence in which they had lived, they thought preferable to the social life that was recommended to them; and their unconquerable aversion against labour, induced them to return continually to the forests, where they passed their lives in idleness. Even those who were restrained by the authority, or paternal kindness of their pious legislator, seldom failed to disperse in his absence, though ever so short, and his death always occasioned a total subversion of the settlement.

But the perseverance of the Jesuits at last conquered those obstacles apparently invincible. Their mission, which began in 1637, gradually acquired some degree of firmness, and before the dissolution of the order consisted of thirty-six villages, twelve of which were situated along the Napo, and twenty-four on the banks of the Maragnon. The number of inhabitants, however, in these villages, was very inconsiderable, and the increase must always have been slow. The women of this part of America are not fruitful; the climate is unhealthy, and contagious distempers are frequent. These obstructions to population are augmented by the natural stupidity of the people. Of all the Indians whom the Jesuits had collected, they found none so untractable, or incapable of being animated, as those inhabiting the banks of this great river. Every missionary was obliged to

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put himself at their head, in order to make them pick up the cacao, vanilla, and sarsaparilla, which nature spontaneously offers them. Their whole property consists of a hut, open on all sides, and covered on the top with palm-leaves; a few implements of husbandry; a lance, a bow and arrows for hunting, and some fishing tackle; a tent, a hammock, and a canoe. It has not been found possible to inspire them with desires beyond these articles. They are so well satisfied with what they possess, that they wish for nothing more; they live unconcerned, and die without fear* :---and if happiness consists more in an exemption from the uneasy sensation that attends want, than in the multiplicity of enjoyments that our warts create, these Indians may be said to be the happiest people upon the face of the earth.

While some missionaries were establishing the authority of the court of Madrid on the banks of the Maragnon, others were doing the same service to that of Lisbon. Six or seven days journey below the settlement of St. Ignacio de Pavas, the last under the jurisdiction of Spain, is that of St. Paul, the first of the six villages formed by the Portuguese Carmelites. They are all on the south side of the river, where the ground is higher, less liable to be overflowed, and consequently more healthful, than on the north side. Those missions, at the distance of five hundred leagues from the sea, exhibit a pleasant and singular prospect; churches and houses prettily built, Americans neatly dressed, and all sorts of European furniture! This the Indians procure at Gran Para, whither they go in their boats once a year, to sell the cacao which they pick up along the river side, where, as already observed, it grows spontaneously.

If the inhabitants of Maynas were at liberty to form connexions with these Indian neighbours, they might acquire, by such an intercourse, many conveniences.

* Ulloa gives us several instances of this unconcern, exceeding even stoical apathy. "An Indian," says he, "had for some time absented himself from the service of the church; and the priest being informed, that it was occasioned by his drinking early in the morning, charged him with his fault on the Sunday following, when he had been particularly ordered to make his appearance, and directed that he should receive some lashes, the usual punishment of such delinquents. After receiving this chastisement he turned about to the priest, and thanked him for having dealt with him according to his deserts. The priest replied by some words of exhortation to him, and the audience in general, never to omit any duty of Christianity. But no sooner had he concluded his pious admonition, than the simple Indian stepped up to him, and desired that he would order him a like number of *lashes* for next Sunday, as he had made an appointment for a *drinking match*, and could not be present." Voyage, lib. vi. c. 6. "Their contempt of those evils," observes the same ingenious author, "which make the strongest impression on the minds of men, is such, that they view the approach of death without any perturbation. The pain of the dilemma affects them more than the danger of it." Accordingly, "when the priests perform the last offices to dying persons, their answers are delivered with such composure as leaves no doubt, but the inward state of their mind corresponds with these external appearances." When the patient is exhorted, by his spiritual physician, "to a sincere repentance, and to implore the mercy of his Creator, otherwise his soul will be punished to all eternity," the usual answer is, "So it will be, father!"—And such as are condemned to suffer punishment in this world, go to the place of execution with equal unconcern; kneeling when they are desired, repeating their prayers word for word, but all the time rolling their eyes about like sportive children, whose weak age is diverted by trifling objects. Id. ibid.

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with which they cannot be supplied from Quito; the Cordeleras, which separate them from that place, cutting off their communication more effectually than it would be by the intervention of immense seas. This indulgence of government might perhaps be productive of considerable advantages to both Spain and Portugal; and they might both possibly be made sensible, should the experiment be tried that it would be for their mutual interest to encourage that intercourse. The province of Quito is poor, as is well known, from want of an opportunity of disposing of the surplus of those commodities that are not to be had at Para. The two provinces assisting each other, by means of the Napo and the Maragnon, would rise to a degree of importance, which they can never otherwise attain. The mother-countries would in time reap the advantages of it, and it could never be prejudicial to them; because Quito cannot purchase what is sent from Europe to America, without some new market for its productions, and Para consumes nothing but what Lisbon obtains from foreign countries.

But national antipathies, and the jealousies of crowned heads, are attended with the same effects as the passions of men in private life. The spirit of hatred and revenge will rather induce both to submit to inconveniencies, than be supplied by those they dislike. These passions are constantly kept awake by mutual jealousy, mutual injuries, and the effusion of blood they occasion. Evident proofs of this jealousy are to be seen in that chain of forts, extending from the district of Coari to the sea. These were erected by the Portuguese to secure their dominion in this part of America; and though they are at a great distance from each other, but slightly fortified and thinly garrisoned, the few Indians who inhabit the intermediate spaces, are completely kept in subjection. The petty nations that refused to submit, have disappeared, and taken refuge in some remote or unknown region; but the rich soil they have abandoned has not been cultivated, though the interest of the colony and the mother-country seem equally to require it.

The country of the Amazons indeed furnishes Portugal with some sarsaparilla, vanilla, coffee, cotton, woods for cabinet-work, timber for ship-building, and cacao. This produce, however, is nothing to what it might be. It is chiefly found about Gran Para, the capital of the district, whereas the cultures ought to extend all along the great river, and on the fertile banks of an infinite number of navigable rivers that fall into it. Nor are these valuable articles of commerce the only ones with which this part of Brazil could supply the parent state. If able naturalists had been sent into a country, where the climate is so different from that of Europe, much useful knowledge might have been procured, and many valuable productions encouraged. Chance alone has discovered the Cucheris and Pecari, two aromatic trees, whose fruits have the same properties as the nutmeg and the clove. Perhaps culture might give them that degree of perfection which they want.

The Portuguese have paid more attention to their settlements towards Rio de la Plata, and have derived more important advantages from them. They had

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established themselves in 1679 at St. Sacrament, opposite to Buenos-Ayres, when they were accidentally discovered by the Spaniards. The Guaranies, under the command of their spiritual leaders, hastened thither to make amends for the neglect of government. They attacked the new erected fortifications without hesitation, and demolished them with an intrepidity that did honour to their courage. The court of Lisbon, which had built great hopes on that settlement, was not discouraged by this misfortune; but requested that, till such time as its claim could be adjusted, it might be allowed a place where the Portuguese could be sheltered from the storms, if forced, by stress of weather, to enter the Plata. Charles II. of Spain, who dreaded war, and hated business, was weak enough to comply with their request, only stipulating that the place so granted should be deemed his property; that no more than fourteen Portuguese families should be sent thither; that the houses should be built of wood, and thatched; that no fort should be erected; and that the governor of Buenos-Ayres should have a right to inspect both the settlement and the ships that should come into its harbour.

If the Jesuits, who had conducted the war, had also been intrusted with the negociation, such a permission would never have been granted. It was impossible that a fixed settlement in such a situation, however inconsiderable, should not become a source of frequent altercations with enterprising neighbours, whose claims were very great; who were sure of the protection of all the enemies of Spain, and whose vicinity to the settlements of their countrymen would enable them to take advantage of every opportunity to aggrandise and fortify themselves. The event soon discovered the danger that might have been foreseen. Immediately on the elevation of a French prince to the throne of Spain, while all was still in confusion, and uncertainty in regard to the consequences of that great revolution, the Portuguese restored the fortifications of St. Sacrament with amazing celerity. The precaution which they took at the same time of giving alarm to the Guaranies, by ordering some troops to advance towards their frontiers, induced them to hope that they should prevent any disturbances from that quarter. But they were mistaken. The Jesuits having detected the artifice brought their converts to St. Sacrament, which was already besieged. Those brave Indians on their arrival offered to mount the breach, though they knew it was but just opened. When they began their approach, some batteries were fired upon them from the town, but they stood the cannonade without ever breaking their ranks, nor could they be restrained by the fire of the small arms, which likewise killed many of them. The intrepidity with which they continued to advance, raised such astonishment among the Portuguese that they fled to their ships, and abandoned the place*.

A D. 1731.

The misfortunes which Philip V. experienced in Europe prevented this success from being of any advantage. The settlement of St. Sacrament was firmly re-established by the peace of Utrecht. Queen Anna, who made that peace, and who neither neglected her own interests nor those of her allies, required Spain to

* Hist. du Paraguay par le P. Charlevoix.

give up this contested spot. Being now under no apprehensions, the Portuguese of St. Sacramento began to carry on an immense trade with Buenos-Ayres. This contraband traffic had long subsisted, though in an inferior degree. Rio Janeiro furnished Buenos-Ayres with sugar, tobacco, wine, brandy, negroes, and woollen goods; and received in return flour, biscuit, dried or salt meat, and money. As soon as the two colonies had a safe commodious staple, their connexions were unlimited. The court of Madrid, which soon perceived the road the treasures of Peru were taking, shewed great marks of discontent; and these discontents increased, as the injury complained of grew to a greater height.

A perpetual source of division was thus opened between the two nations; and as the conciliatory methods, proposed from time to time, were found impracticable, an open rupture was expected to be the consequence. At last however, matters were adjusted. It was agreed at Madrid on the thirteenth day of January 1750, that Portugal should give up to Spain the colony of St. Sacramento, and the north bank of Rio de la Plata, together with the village of St. Christopher and the adjacent lands, situated between the rivers Ypura and Issa, which fall into the river of Amazons. Spain, on her side, gave up all the lands and habitations bordering on the east side of the river Uruguay, from the river Ibicui to the north; the village of Santa Rosa, and all the others on the eastern bank of the Guarapey.

This exchange was censured in both courts. Some ventured to say at Lisbon, that it was bad policy to sacrifice a settlement whose illicit traffic brought in such a prodigious sum annually to the mother-country, for possessions whose advantages were distant or precarious. The clamours ran still higher at Madrid, and were more general. It was imagined that the Portuguese were already masters of the whole extent of the Uruguay; that the settlements all along the Plata were filled with their merchandise; that they were seen penetrating by means of several rivers into Tucuman, as far as Potosi, and by degrees securing to themselves all the riches of Peru!—It appeared incredible, that the same ministers who had considered it as impossible to put a stop to a contraband trade, which could only be carried on from one spot, should flatter themselves they could prevent it, when an hundred channels were laid open to it: it was, they said, like shutting a window against a thief, and throwing open the door.

These discontents gave rise to numberless cabals, which were all laid to the charge of the Jesuits, who were known to be averse from an arrangement that must necessarily dismember their republic. There was sufficient reason to suspect them of exerting every effort to prevent the conclusion of an agreement so destructive to their views: they were banished from both courts; the intrigues ceased, and the treaty was ratified. It was still necessary, however, to enforce the execution of it in America, which appeared to be a matter of some difficulty. The Guaranies had not been subdued, but had freely submitted to Spain; consequently they had a right to object, that they had not given that crown a power of disposing of them. Without being conversant in the subtleties of the law of nations, they might think themselves entitled to determine.

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what seemed most conducive to their own happiness. Their known abhorrence of the Portuguese yoke, gave still more reason to suspect their opposition to the treaty. In so critical a situation the greatest caution was requisite.

That was not neglected. The forces which both powers had sent over from Europe, and those which could be collected in America, united to prevent or overcome those difficulties which were foreseen. These measures did not alarm those against whom they were concerted. Though the seven settlements that had been ceded were not succoured, at least not openly, by the rest, and though the chiefs who had hitherto led them to battle were no longer at their head, the Guaranies were not afraid to take up arms in defence of their liberty. But their military conduct was not such as it ought to have been. Instead of satisfying themselves with harassing the enemy, and cutting off their subsistence, which was conveyed from the distance of two hundred leagues, the Guaranies ventured to engage them in the open field, and were defeated. Their loss, however, was not considerable. If they had been totally routed, they were determined to quit their possessions, to carry off every thing they could, to set fire to the rest, and leave the country nothing but a desert. Whether the two powers who had agreed to make the exchange were intimidated by this spirited conduct, or whether one or both became sensible of the disadvantages of the treaty they had entered into, it was cancelled in 1761, and things remained upon the old footing; but both courts retained a violent aversion against the Jesuits, who were thought to have kindled the war in Paraguay, in order to promote their own designs.

It is uncertain how far those pious legislators have deserved this accusation, as the proofs in support of the charge have not yet been laid before the public; all therefore that a writer, who has nothing to guide him but conjecture, can venture to assert is, that presumptions are strong against them. It was hardly possible that men, who, with infinite labour, had erected such a vast edifice, could patiently behold its ruin. Independent even of pride and self-interest, which must have a considerable influence upon a society, that, from its first establishment, had been secretly aiming at dominion, the Jesuits must have thought themselves intrusted with the felicity of those humane and simple people, who sheltering themselves under their protection, depended upon them for their future destiny. Leaving this matter, however, to be determined by the dark dealers in *secret memoirs*, by those who have, or pretend to have, access to the waste-paper cabinets of princes, we shall proceed to speak of other causes which conspired to enlarge the possessions of the Portuguese.

In the district of St. Vincent, the southernmost in Brazil, and the nearest to Rio de la Plata, thirteen leagues from the sea is a town called St. Paul. It was founded by those convicts who were first sent from Portugal to America. As soon as they perceived that they were to be subjected to the restraints of law, they withdrew from the places they had first inhabited, intermarried with the natives, and in a short time became so profligate, that their fellow citizens broke off all intercourse with them. The contempt which they had met with, and the fear

fear of being restrained in their licentiousness, together with the love of liberty, made them desirous of being independent. The situation of their town, which could be defended by an handful of men against the most powerful armies that could be sent against them, inspired them with the resolution of being subject to no foreign power, and their ambition was successful. Profligate men of all nations resorted in great numbers to this establishment. All travellers were shut out from the new republic, under the severest prohibitions. In order to obtain admittance, it was previously necessary to promise to settle there, and candidates were subjected to a severe trial. Those who could not go through that kind of noviciate, or who were suspected of perfidy, were barbarously murdered, as were all who had any inclination to quit the community *.

A pure air, a serene sky, a temperate climate, though in the twenty-fourth degree of south latitude, and a territory abounding with corn, sugar, and excellent pasture, conspired to induce the Paulists to lead a life of indolence and effeminacy: but that restlessness so natural to fierce spirits, that habit of roving acquired by a lawless banditti, that desire of dominion, which is nearly connected with a love of independency; the progress of freedom, which leads men to wish for glory of some kind or other, and to be emulous of distinguishing themselves—all these causes, combined or separate, perhaps prompted the Paulists to forego an easy life, and to engage in toilsome and hazardous excursions.

The first object of these excursions was to procure slaves for their cultures. When they had depopulated the adjacent country, they proceeded to the province of Guayra, where the Spanish Jesuits had collected and civilized the Guaranies. These new Christians were exposed to so many violences, and so many of them were carried off, that they suffered themselves to be persuaded to remove to the unwholesome banks of the Parana and the Uruguay, which they still inhabit. They reaped little advantage, however, from this compliance; for it was found that they could promise themselves no safety, unless they were allowed to defend themselves with the same arms as those with which they were attacked. To request that they should be furnished with such arms, was a matter of too delicate a nature to be proposed abruptly: it was necessary in the first place to shewn the propriety of such a measure. Spain had laid it down as a fundamental maxim, never to introduce the use of fire-arms among the Indians, lest these unfortunate victims of her insatiable avarice should, one day, make use of them to free themselves from a yoke which they found so galling. The lawgivers of the Guaranies applauded this jealous precaution in regard to slaves, who were kept under by compulsion; but they thought it unnecessary with respect to men who had voluntarily submitted to the king of Spain, and who were too sensible of the benefits they now possessed, ever to think of revolting, so long as they were permitted to enjoy their freedom, which the sovereign was bound to maintain †. In a word, they so well pleaded the cause of their converts, that, in spite of opposition and pre-

* Voyages de Correal. Observat. du P. Lozano
Paraguay.

† Charlevoix, Hist. du

BOOK II. judice, they obtained their request. The Guaranies were indulged with fire-arms in 1639, and soon made such good use of them, that they became the bulwark of Paraguay, and were able to keep off the Paulists.

These desperate men now resolved to procure by craft, what they could no longer obtain by force. Dressed in the habit of Jesuits, they repaired to the places where the missionaries were accustomed to resort in quest of converts, and there set up crosses. They made some trifling presents to such Indians as they met with; and some of the most intelligent among them, made a short discourse, in the Indian language, with which they were generally acquainted, on the nature of Christianity, accompanied with the warmest exhortations to induce their auditors to embrace it. When, by these artifices, they had assembled a certain number of profelytes, they pretended to conduct them to a place where every thing was in readiness to make them happy. The greater part followed them implicitly; and when they arrived at a particular station, the troops that lay concealed rushed out upon the credulous Indians, loaded them with fetters, and carried them off. Some who made their escape, gave the alarm, which produced a general suspicion, extremely prejudicial to the pious purposes of the Jesuits, and occasioned a stop to be put to these deceitful practices*.

The Paulists afterwards carried on their depredations in another quarter, and extended them as far as the river of Amazons. They are said to have destroyed no less than a million of Indians. Those who have escaped their fury, in an extent of three or four hundred leagues, are become more savage than in their original state: they have fled for safety to the caves of the mountains, or dispersed themselves among the darkest recesses of the forests. Their persecutors have not shared a better fate, having all gradually perished in these dangerous excursions. Unhappily however for America, their place has been supplied with vagabond Brazilians, fugitive negroes, and Europeans who were fond of the same roving life. The same spirit has always prevailed at St. Paul's; even after some particular circumstances, which shall be mentioned in the sequel, had induced that disorderly society to acknowledge the dominion of Portugal. But their excursions are now carried on in such a manner that they rather promote than obstruct the views of the mother-country. By following the course of several rivers, they have attempted to open a way into Peru by the north of Paraguay. The vicinity of lake Xarayes has put them in possession of the gold mines of Guiba and Montegrosso, which they have opened, and still continue to work them, without meeting with any opposition from Spain. They would have carried their usurpations farther had they not been prevented by the Chequitos†.

While these restless and enterprising men were ravaging the banks of the Amazons, of the Plata, and the mountains of Peru, the sea-coasts of Brazil were daily improving in rich productions. This colony sent annually to the mother-country thirty-two millions weight of sugar, which was not only enough for its own consumption, but sufficient to supply a great part of Europe; while

* Id. *ibid.*

† *Hist. Gen. des Voyages*, tom. XIV. Raynal, liv. ix.

it produced a considerable quantity of tobacco, which could be disposed of to advantage either in Africa or the European markets; balsam of Capivi, a balsamic oil that distills from incisions made in a tree called *capaiba*; ipecacuanha, well known as a mild emetic; cacao, which grew wild in some places, and was cultivated in others; cotton, superior to that of the Levant or the Caribbee islands, and almost equal to the finest that comes from the East-Indies; indigo, which the Portuguese have never sufficiently attended to; hides, the produce of cattle that run wild as in other parts of South America; and, lastly, Brazil wood*.

The tree that produces this wood, which gives its name to the country, is as tall and bushy as the oak, and proportionally thick. But he who judges of the quantity of the timber by the size of the tree will be much deceived, as the bark forms the greater part of the plant. The trunk is commonly crooked and knotty like the hawthorn. The leaves are small, roundish, and of a bright green colour; the blossoms, which resemble Lilies of the Valley, are of a lively red, and exhale a fragrant smell. The wood takes a fine polish, and is very fit for turnery-work, but its chief use is for the red dye. The tree generally grows in dry, barren, and rocky grounds. It is found in most provinces of Brazil, but chiefly in Pernambuco; and the best grows ten leagues from Olinda, the capital of that province†.

In exchange for these commodities, Portugal supplied Brazil with flour, wine, Brandy, salt, woollen-goods, silks, linen, hardware, and paper: in a word, with all the articles which Europe exports to America, except gold and silver stuffs, which the mother-country has, whether properly or otherwise, prohibited in her colonies. The whole trade was carried on by a fleet, which sailed every year from Lisbon and Oporto in the month of March, and consisted of twenty, or twenty-two ships for Rio Janeiro, thirty for Bahia, as many for Pernambuco, and seven or eight for Para. The ships parted when they came to a certain latitude, and proceeded to their respective destinations. They afterwards met at Bahia to sail for Portugal, which they reached in September or October, the year following, under convoy of five or six men of war, that had escorted them in their passage out.

This arrangement, resembling that of Spain, has been blamed by many able politicians, who maintained that it would have been better to permit the merchants to send out their ships, and order them home when it suited them best. Such a system would infallibly have reduced the expence of freight, which must affect the price of commodities. A free trade would have employed more ships, and voyages would have been more frequent. It would have strengthened the navy, and encouraged agriculture. The intercourse between the colonies and the mother-country being more frequent, would have given such information as would have enabled government to extend its protection more easily, as well as to secure its authority: and the court of Lisbon seemed frequently inclined to

* Hist. Gen. du Commer. par. M. Savary, art. Brazil. Voyages, tom. XIV.

† Hist. Gen. des

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yield to these considerations ; but it was at first deterred by the fear of seeing the ships fall into the hands of the enemy, if they sailed separately, and afterwards by the obstacles which the viceroys of Brazil opposed to this alteration. The increase of their wealth and of their power equally required that the business of the colony should be transacted in the capital ; so that after having contrived to attract it to that spot, they succeeded in retaining it there.

In consequence of this regulation, San Salvador, or Bahia, as it is also called, became a very flourishing city. It is built on an high and steep rock at the bottom of the Bay of All Saints, and commands a spacious and commodious harbour. As it has the sea in front, a lake forming a crescent, almost wholly invests it on the land side. This situation renders it in a great measure impregnable by nature, and the harbour is defended by two strong forts. It is divided into an upper and lower town. The lower town is the port, and is connected with what is properly termed the city by three streets, which run slantwise up the eminence, as it would be next to impossible to go right up. The goods are drawn up by the help of pulleys. In the lower town, which is pretty extensive, is a spacious market-place, where is kept a continual fair for commodities of all kinds, brought in from the neighbouring country *. The upper town is as regular and well laid out as the unevenness of the ground on which it stands will permit. It contains upwards of two thousand houses, and a proportional number of inhabitants. Many of the houses are built with great magnificence ; and the furniture is the more rich and elegant, as extravagance in dress, so far as it regards the wearing of gold and silver stuffs, is strictly prohibited, as already noticed. But their passion for shew, which no law can eradicate, has induced the inhabitants to be very expensive in decorations ; such as crosses, medals, and diamond chaplets.

As the situation of Bahia does not admit of coaches, the people of rank, who in every country are desirous of being distinguished from the vulgar, have contrived to be carried in cotton hammocks. Supinely stretched upon velvet cushions, and surrounded with silk curtains, which they open and shut at pleasure, those proud and lazy mortals move about more voluptuously, though less expeditiously, than in the most easy and elegant wheel-machines. But the women seldom enjoy this luxury ; for the Portuguese of Brazil, though superstitious to a degree of fanaticism, will hardly allow their wives, covered with a veil, to go to church on their high festivals. This restraint, which is the effect of ungovernable jealousy, does not however prevent the ladies from carrying on intrigues, though sure of being stabbed to the heart upon the slightest suspicion. Yet by a lenity, more judicious than that of many European nations, a girl who yields to the importunities of a lover, is used with less severity. But if the father cannot conceal her infamy, by disposing of her in marriage, he abandons her to the scanda-

* Tract accompanying the English translation of Ulloa's Voyage, by Mr. Adams of Waltham Abbey, who resided many years in South America.

lous trade of a courtesan*. Thus riches, especially when acquired by rapine and bloodshed, and not preserved by labour, bring along with them a train of vices, and every species of corruption.

That want of society, which necessarily flows from the separation of the sexes, is not the only impediment to the pleasures and enjoyments of life at Bahia. The hypocrisy of some, the superstition of others; parsimony at home, and pompous parade abroad; extreme indulgence, bordering upon extreme cruelty, in a climate where all the sensations are quick and impetuous; the distrust that naturally accompanies weakness, the indolence that trusts every thing to slaves, whether it relates to pleasure or business—all the vices that are to be found, either separately or collectively, in the most corrupt southern countries, constitute the character of the Portuguese in this capital. The depravity of their manners, however, seems to decrease, in proportion as the mother-country becomes more enlightened.

Notwithstanding these vices, which have generally prevailed, though not in the same degree in all parts of Brazil, it had long been in a prosperous way, when towards the beginning of the present century, the discovery of the gold mines gave it an additional lustre, which occasioned universal astonishment. The circumstances that produce this discovery are variously related; but the most common opinion is, That a caravan of Portuguese, who went from Rio Janeiro in 1695, penetrated into the continent, and meeting with the Paulists, received from them gold dust, which they understood was procured from the mines of Parana-Panama, in exchange for European commodities. A few years after, a company of soldiers from Rio Janeiro, who were sent to quell some Indians in the inland parts, found on their march some gold fish-hooks, and were informed, that many torrents, rushing from the mountains, brought gold into the vallies.

On this information, a strict search was made; and though few veins of gold have been found so rich as to answer the purpose of working for any time, the gold picked up in such vallies as have been overflowed, and in the sands of rivers, after the waters have subsided, has exceeded belief. This labour is chiefly performed by negroes. If a slave brings in the quantity of gold required of him, his master can claim nothing more. The overplus is his own property. It is some consolation to him to be able to alleviate the burden of slavery, and have a prospect of purchasing his freedom, by the very toils that are attached to that state. If we were to estimate the quantity of gold that Brazil annually furnishes, by the fifth which the king of Portugal receives, it might be computed at two millions of pounds sterling; but we may venture to assert, without being supposed to exaggerate; that the desire of eluding the duty, deprives the government of one third of the produce. To this prodigious sum must be added, the gold drawn from the Portuguese settlement of Mozambique on the eastern coast of Africa, and the silver acquired by the illicit trade with Buenos Ayres†.

* Raynal, liv. ix.

† Europ. Set. in Amer.

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The first political writers, who turned their thoughts towards the probable consequences of the discovery made in Brazil, did not hesitate to pronounce, that the difference of value between gold and silver would be diminished. The experience of all countries, and all ages had taught them, that, though many ounces of silver had always been given for an ounce of gold, because mines of the former had always been more common than those of the latter, yet the value of both metals had varied in every country in proportion to the abundance of either. In Japan the proportion of gold to silver is as one to eight; in China, as one to ten; in other parts of the East as one to eleven, twelve, thirteen, and fourteen, as we advance further west. The like variations are to be met with in Europe. In ancient Greece, gold was to silver as one to thirteen. When the produce of all the mines in the old world was brought to Rome, the most settled proportion was one to ten. It rose as far as one to thirteen under Tiberius. Numberless variations are to be met with during the barbarous ages. When Columbus discovered the New World, the proportion was less than one to twelve.

The quantity of gold and silver which was afterwards brought into Europe from Mexico and Peru, not only rendered these metals more common, but increased still farther the value of gold above silver, as there was greater plenty of the latter than of the former in those countries. Spain, which was in possession of both, and of course the best judge of the proportion, settled it at one to sixteen in the coin of the kingdom; and this proportion, with some slight variations, was adopted throughout all Europe. The same proportion still exists; but we have no reason to condemn the speculations of those, who conjectured that it would alter. If gold has fallen but little in the markets, and not at all in the coin of Europe, since the discovery of the mines of Brazil, this singularity is owing to particular circumstances, which do not affect the principle on which the contrary supposition was found. A great deal of gold is now used in gilding, and in setting jewels, which has prevented the value of silver from falling so much as it would, if our fashions had not altered. This spirit of luxury has also kept up the price of diamonds, though now become more common.

Men have at all times been fond of making a parade of their riches, either because they were originally the reward of strength, and the mark of power, or because they have every where obtained that respect which is due only to virtue and talents. A desire of attracting the attention of others, prompts men to ornament themselves with the choicest and most brilliant substances that nature can supply. This vanity equally prevails among savage and civilized nations. Of all the substances that represent the splendour of opulence, none is so precious as the diamond: none has been of such value in trade, or so ornamental in society as this bright gem. There are diamonds of all colours, and of every shade of the several colours. The diamond has the red of the ruby, the orange of the hyacinth, the blue of the sapphire, and the green of the emerald. This last is the dearest, when of a beautiful tint. The rose diamonds, blue and yellow, are the next in value. The yellowish and the blackish are least esteemed. Transpa-

rency

rency and clearness are the natural and essential properties of the diamond, to which art has added the brilliant and sparkling lustre of the several fables.

There are very few diamond mines. Till of late years we knew of none except in the East Indies: and some apprehensions were raised, that the continual wars in that country would put a stop to this source of riches; but these were removed by a discovery that was made at Serra de Ferio, in Brazil. Some slaves who were condemned to look for gold, used to find some little bright stones, which they threw away among the sand and gravel. Some curious miners preserved several of these singular pebbles, which were shewn to Pedro de Almayda, governor general of the mines. As he had been at the East Indies, he suspected that they might be diamonds. In order to ascertain this point, the court of Lisbon, in 1730, commissioned de Acugna, her minister in Holland, to make the necessary inquiries. He put some of them into the hands of able artificers, who having cut them, declared that they were very fine diamonds. The Portuguese immediately searched for them with such success, that the Rio Janeiro fleet, in 1732, brought home eleven hundred and forty-six ounces. This produced such plenty that their price fell considerably; but the ministry took such measures as made them soon rise to their original value, which they have maintained ever since. They conferred on a company the exclusive right of searching for and selling diamonds; and even to restrain the avidity of the company itself, it was required to employ no more than six hundred slaves in that business. It has since, however, been permitted to employ as many as it pleases, on condition that a certain sum, amounting to about sixty-five pounds sterling, is paid for every slave. But in both contracts the court has reserved to itself all diamonds that shall exceed a certain number of carrats*.

It is not known whether the diamonds of Brazil grow in the valleys where they are found, or whether they are brought down by an infinite number of torrents that rush into them, and by five small rivers that flow from the neighbouring mountains. It is certain, however, that the diamonds do not come from a quarry; that they are scattered about, and picked up in greater quantities in the rainy seasons, and after violent storms. They are neither so hard nor so clear as those of the East Indies, nor do they sparkle so much, but they are whiter. They are bought up in their rough state by the English and Dutch, who cut them, and then dispose of them all over Europe†.

* Raynal, liv. ix.

† The finest diamonds in the world are that of the great mogul, which weighs two hundred and seventy-nine carrats and one-sixteenth; that of the grand duke, which weighs one hundred and thirty-nine carrats; the great Sancy, of one hundred and six carrats; and the Pitt (now in the possession of the king of France) which weighs one hundred and thirty-six carrats three grains. But all these are trifling in regard to size, compared with the diamond sent some years ago from Brazil to the king of Portugal, which weighs one thousand six hundred and eighty carrats, or twelve ounces and an half. We know of no proportion by which to ascertain the value of such a gem, but it has been estimated at fifty-six millions seven hundred and eighty-seven thousand five hundred pounds sterling. Raynal, liv. ix.

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The gold and diamond mines, added to a rich culture, should have made Brazil the most flourishing colony in the New World. In order to effect this, however, it was necessary that the country should be preserved from intestine commotions and foreign invasions. Both these objects were therefore taken into consideration. All the mines are situated in the captainships of St. Vincent and Rio Janeiro, or in the adjacent lands. Some were in the hands of the Paulists, and the rest lay exposed to their inroads. As those banditti were too numerous and too brave to be brought under subjection by force, it was thought advisable to treat with them. As they could make no use of their new acquired wealth, without a free communication with those parts where the luxuries and the conveniences of life were to be purchased, they were more tractable than was expected. They consented to pay, like the rest of the Portuguese, a fifth of their gold to the crown; but they determined the amount of this tribute themselves, and never made it what it ought to have been. The government prudently winked at the fraud. It was foreseen that the connexions, and new way of life of the Paulists, would gradually soften their manners, and that sooner or later they would be brought to submit. This revolution accordingly happened in 1730, when the whole republic acknowledged the authority of the court of Lisbon, and were placed on the same footing with the other Portuguese in Brazil.

The town of Rio Janeiro, which is the mart for the produce of most of the mines, as well as for the productions that are brought from the neighbouring captainships for the consumption of Europe, had been fortified before this important event. New fortifications have since been added; but if gold can make its way into brazen towers, through iron gates, much more readily will iron break down the gates that defend gold and diamonds: and the court of Lisbon, as if sensible of this truth, have not thought it sufficient to fortify, even in the strongest manner, Rio Janeiro itself. Between the captainship of St. Vincent and the mouth of Rio de la Plata, lies a barren coast, about an hundred and fifty leagues in length. As nothing invited the Portuguese to settle there, it was always totally neglected; but the gold lately found in the mines which water these deserts, has attracted some colonists thither, and the government has bestowed its attention in endeavouring to render perpetual this new channel of wealth. It has established some posts along the coast, and fortified St. Catharine.

This island, which is only parted from the continent by a very narrow canal, is about nine leagues long and two broad. Though the land is by no means low, it is not seen at a distance, because it is shaded by the neighbouring mountains on the continent. Navigators find there a perpetual spring, excellent water, great plenty of wood, a variety of delicious fruits, vegetables, which are so welcome to sailors, and a pure air, except in the harbour, where the hills interrupt the circulation of that fluid, and make it constantly damp and unwholesome. One hundred and fifty, or two hundred banditti, who had taken refuge here towards the beginning of the present century, acknowledged the authority

of Portugal, but did not adopt the interested and exclusive system of that state. They admitted indiscriminately the ships of all nations that were sailing to the South Sea, and gave them the produce of their own island in exchange for arms, linen, wearing apparel, and brandy. Besides a contempt for gold, they shewed an indifference for all the conveniencies with which nature did not supply them, that would have done honour to the most virtuous men. The scum and refuse of civilized bodies may sometimes produce a well regulated society. Such a regeneration at last happened among the people who had fled to the island of St. Catherine. Banished from their native country by the dread of those atrocious punishments, too often inflicted on slight offences, they formed a commercial settlement, which was beneficial even to the community that had ejected them : and about the year 1738, the crown sent them a governor, and fortified their harbour. As it is far superior to any on that coast, it is easy to foresee, that if the riches of those parts correspond with the expectations which have been raised of them, that asylum of vagabonds will in time become the chief settlement in Brazil, and the most considerable sea-port in South America.

From this account it appears, that the court of Lisbon has taken the most prudent measures for securing to itself the produce of the mines of Brazil. The same attention has not hitherto been paid to the culture of the earth, though that more valuable source of riches was in a critical situation, at the period of which we are speaking, and required the most mature consideration. All the European nations that had settlements in America, then began to cultivate the same productions which had long enriched Brazil. This competition reduced the price of those commodities ; and the Portuguese, though they laboured as industriously as ever, found that their profits grew daily less considerable. These labours became irksome to them, and many abandoned them entirely, tempted by the hopes of enriching themselves by picking up gold.

A. D. 1738.

Had the mother-country understood her true interest, and been less elated with this new source of riches, the misfortunes it gave rise to might have been prevented by taking off the enormous duty which the colony paid for all the goods they exported or imported ; or, if it had been found necessary, by giving encouragements, which her new treasures enabled her to do with a liberal hand. These would have induced the planter, who knew his soil to be far superior to that of the Antilles, and was not ignorant of the other advantages he had over the persons engaged in clearing those islands, to persevere in a labour which must procure him a comfortable subsistence, if not an ample fortune, without any anxiety or uncertainty.

This matter requires some explanation. All persons who have attentively observed America, know that the coasts of Brazil are very fertile. The sugar-canes are stronger than those of the West Indies, and other productions have the same superiority. The inhabitants are not reduced to the necessity of manuring a poor or an exhausted soil. There is such plenty of land, that, when one piece of ground is spent, a fresh one may be broke up, which will yield plentiful crops without much trouble. The inland parts only want hands to cultivate them,

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and many navigable rivers are ready to convey the produce to the sea. The plantations are never destroyed by hurricanes, or parched with drought. There are few places in Brazil where the intemperature of the air shortens the lives of those employed in the labours of the field, and none where the inhabitants are swept away by that dreadful mortality so frequent in many parts of the New World. Every undertaking is carried on with ease by the assistance of the numberless flocks with which the plains are covered. The slave does not impatiently expect his subsistence to be conveyed to him over stormy seas; which, when it arrives, is often at such an immoderate price, that he is not always allowed a sufficiency: he finds, without much trouble, an wholesome and plentiful provision on the very land that he cultivates; and the master, on his part, can be under no apprehension of seeing an end to his good fortune, as he well knows, that the colony has not yet attained to a tenth part of its culture.

One hundred and fifty thousand negroes are already employed in Brazil. These are annually recruited by eight or ten thousand, and may be easily multiplied to any number that can be required. As it is customary for the planter to import them immediately from Africa, he has nothing to fear from the negligence, unskilfulness, or dishonesty of the European merchants. His ships have the accumulated advantages of vending part of his produce*, of making a small stay at the end of their voyage, and of a short and easy passage both going and coming. But, notwithstanding all these favourable circumstances, the annual produce of Brazil at present does not exceed twenty-two millions weight of raw sugar, and twelve thousand bales of tobacco, with a small quantity of sarsaparilla, cacao, rice, and indigo.

Among the various methods devised for increasing the produce of so rich a country, the Portuguese ministry have preferred that of giving freedom to the Brazilians, as the safest, cheapest, and most humane. In 1755 they declared, that for the future all the American subjects of Portugal, whether they were so by their own free will or by compulsion, should be deemed citizens to all intents and purposes, and be entitled to that appellation on the same terms as the Europeans. They are subject only to the same duties, the same path is open to their talents, and they may acquire the same honours. No other power has treated its American subjects with so much humanity; and yet this singular circumstance in itself so striking, and so favourable to mankind, has escaped the notice of almost every historian, even in the middle of the eighteenth century, in this enlightened and philosophical age, when the public good is the universal topic of conversation.

Had the new system produced the desired effect, Portugal would have received a sufficient compensation for this indifference. We should then have seen the Brazilians applying themselves to the culture of their lands, and multiplying

* The Portuguese trade very largely in tobacco to the coast of Africa, where they not only sell it directly to the natives, but supply the ships of other nations, who find it a necessary article to enable them to carry on the slave and gold dust trade to advantage.

their produce. Their labour would enable them to procure numberless comforts which they have not hitherto enjoyed. The view of their happiness would tempt the savages to quit their forests, and embrace a more tranquil mode of life. By degrees, the influence of their example would spread, and all Brazil would in time become civilized. A mutual confidence would be established between the Americans and the Europeans, and they would become but one people. All would concur in producing the stock of an immense trade to the mother-country, which on her part would not neglect to send a constant supply for the growing wants of the colony. An exact balance would be kept up between their reciprocal interests, and great care would be taken that nothing should interrupt so valuable an harmony:—in a word the Portuguese, by one act of humanity, would have made amends for all the injuries they have done the inhabitants of America.

Unfortunately, however, these flattering prospects have all proved chimerical. Some hopes might have been entertained of success, if this great change had been attempted by slow degrees. The Brazilians might insensibly have been attached to the comforts of society: they might have been trained up to useful labours; by which means they would gradually have got the better of their natural indolence, and been inspired with the desire of possessing property. But though an happy revolution might have been prepared by these mild measures, much would still have remained to be done, which seems to have escaped the penetration of the ministry: they have neglected granting lands to the new subjects in convenient situations; they have not made them sufficient advances; they have not supplied them with able guides to direct them, nor have their chiefs been men of integrity and humanity. Nothing therefore has been done for the public good by granting liberty to the Brazilians, and much has been done against it by abridging the Europeans of their freedom, in subjecting them to the tyranny of a monopoly. A regulation so contrary to the genius of the nation was neither foreseen nor expected.

Portugal had made the most valuable discoveries in Africa, in Asia, and America, without the assistance of any exclusive company. Mere societies of merchants, in which kings, princes, and noblemen were concerned, fitted out large fleets for those three parts of the world; raised the Portuguese name above that of every other European nation, and brought about the most important and interesting revolution in commerce that the universe had ever beheld. Little therefore was it to be expected that a people, who in the barbarous ages had pursued the ineffable advantages of competition, would in an enlightened period adopt a pernicious system, which by collecting the principles of life and motion into a small part of the body politic, leaves all the rest in a state of inactivity and languor; yet at the same time that liberty was granted to the Brazilians, the Maraggon company was created, and four years afterwards the company of Fernambucca, in consequence of which all the northern part of Brazil was enslaved. Their charter is for twenty years, and foreigners settled in Portugal may become proprietors. They exercise the most horrid tyranny over the natives

A. D. 1755.

cont.

coast that has been granted to them, the effect of which is sufficiently evident in the diminution of the productions.

After this historical narration, in which we have had occasion to mention every thing of importance relative to the principal towns and districts in Brazil, a geographical description of the country would be altogether impertinent. It will therefore be sufficient to observe, that Brazil is divided into fifteen captainships or provinces, all under the government of one viceroy, who resides, as already observed, at Bahia. He has two councils, one for criminal, the other for civil affairs, in both of which he presides: but to the infinite prejudice of the colony, all the delay, chicanery, and multiplied expences incident to the worst part of the law, and practised by the most unprincipled lawyers, flourish there; at the same time that justice is so lax, that the greatest crimes often pass with impunity.

Almost all the trading powers of Europe are interested in the commerce with Brazil, not one fiftieth part of the exports thither being the produce of the mother-country. The Portuguese, like the Spanish merchant, is only the trustee and factor*; for though in Portugal, as in Spain, all trade with her colonies is strictly prohibited to foreigners, this regulation like all others that contradict the very nature of their object, is little regarded. The Portuguese do not always enjoy even the commission trade: they lend or sell their names to the English, who formerly engrossed almost the whole of this lucrative commerce, and are still more interested than any other nation, both in the trade of Portugal for home-consumption, and what it wants for the use of Brazil. The English deserve to be most favoured; as well in reward of the services they have at different times done that crown, which is indebted to them for its independency, and from the stipulations of treaties, as from the political consideration that no other people consume so much of the produce of Portugal. Partly however from our own supineness, partly from the policy and activity of France, and partly from the fault of the Portuguese themselves, our trade with that kingdom has much declined of late years†.

* It is demonstrable from the registers of the fleets, that, in the space of sixty years, from the discovery of the mines to the year 1756, gold to the amount of one hundred and five millions sterling had been brought from Brazil, and yet in 1754 all the specie in Portugal did not amount to one million. From this account, we may judge of the state of its trade.

† Though Portugal receives annually foreign commodities to the value of more than three millions sterling, it appears from the Custom-house books, that in the space of five years, from 1762 to 1766, inclusively, England has sent goods to Portugal only to the value of 4,183,092l. 14s. 6½d. and has received commodities to the amount of 1,652,047l. 6s. 7½d. so that the balance in money has been but 2,524,045l. 15s. 7½d. As there is little reason to believe that our trade with Portugal has since increased, we may conclude that England, at present, does not enjoy above one third of that rich commerce which she formerly possessed almost entirely.

C H A P. V.

The Dutch and French Settlements in Guiana.

CHAP. V.

GUIANA is bounded on the east by the ocean, on the north by the Orinoco, on the south by the river of Amazons, and on the west by the Rio Negro, which unites those two immense rivers. Viewed in this position, it may be considered as an island, at least two hundred leagues in extent, along the coast from north to south, and above three hundred from east to west. The climate is in general extremely damp and unwholesome, and the soil by no means remarkable for fertility, except in such productions as are natural to the country.

The Orinoco, which forms the northern boundary of Guiana, and which, as is commonly believed, springs from the Cordeleras, after being increased in a course of five hundred and seventy-five leagues, by the influx of a great number of rivers of different magnitudes, empties itself into the ocean by more than fifty channels; and its impetuosity is so great, that it stems the most powerful tides, and preserves the freshness of its waters to the distance of twelve leagues from the land. But this rapidity is not always equal, and owes its variation to a circumstance perhaps peculiar to the Orinoco; which in the month of April begins to swell, and continues to rise during five months. In September it attains its greatest height; at which it continues till October, when it begins to subside, and falls gradually till the month of March, during which it remains in a fixed state of its greatest diminution. The people bordering on this river, but little distant from the burning line, know neither the trouble of cloaths, the restraints of police, nor the burden of government. Free under the yoke of poverty, they live chiefly by hunting, fishing, and on wild fruits.

The state of servitude in which the women are kept in the New World, is undoubtedly the principal cause of the want of population in this part of the globe. In all unpolished nations, it is true, the functions in domestic œconomy, which fall naturally to the share of women, are so many, that they are subjected to hard labour, and must bear more than their full portion of the common burden; but in America their condition is so peculiarly grievous, and their depression so complete, that servitude is a name too mild for their wretched state. A wife, among most tribes, is no better than a beast of burden, destined to every office of labour and fatigue. While the men loiter out the day in sloth, or spend it in amusement, the women are condemned to incessant toil. Tasks are imposed on them without pity, and services are received without complacency or gratitude. Every circumstance reminds the women of this mortifying inferiority: they must approach their lords with reverence, and look

up to them, as more exalted beings. They are not even permitted to eat in their presence*.

This tyranny, which is universal in America, is more grievous on the banks of the Orinoco than in any other place. There are therefore few inhabitants in those countries, though greatly favoured by nature. Mothers have contracted the habit of destroying their female children in infancy, in order to deliver them from that intolerable bondage to which they know they must otherwise be subjected. The very emotions of maternal tenderness impel them to the highest act of unnatural cruelty. Father Gumilla, who confirms this fact, also informs us, that Christianity has not been able to put a stop to so detestable a practice. Being informed that one of his converts had been guilty of such a murder, he went to her, in order to reproach her for her crime in the most severe terms, but he was struck dumb by her reply. She listened to him without any signs of concern; and when he had finished his remonstrance, she desired leave to speak.

"Would to God, O Father!"—cried she, "would to God, that at the instant of my birth my mother had shewn love and compassion enough for her child, to spare me all the evils I have endured, and those which I shall hereafter suffer, to the end of my life!—If my mother had destroyed me at my birth, I should have been dead, it is true, but I should not have been sensible of my death, and I should have escaped the most miserable of all conditions. How many afflictions have I already experienced!—and who can say what I have still to undergo?—Represent to yourself, O father! the troubles that are reserved for an Indian woman among these tribes. The men accompany us into the fields with their bows and arrows, while we go thither laden with an infant, which we carry in a basket, and another which hangs at our breast. They go to kill game or catch fish, while we are employed in digging the ground; and after having gone through all the labours of the culture, are subjected also to those of the harvest. They return in the evening without any burden, and we bring them roots for their food, and maize for their drink. As soon as they come home, they go and amuse themselves with their friends, while we are fetching wood and water to prepare their supper. When they have eaten, they fall asleep, while we pass almost the whole night in grinding maize, and in preparing the *chica*† for them:—and what reward have we for all these labours?—They drink; and when they are intoxicated, they drag us by the hair, and trample us under foot. O father, would to God that my mother had destroyed me at the instant of my birth!

"Thou thyself knowest that our complaints are just: thou hast daily instances before thine eyes of the truth of what I say; but the greatest misfortune under which we labour it is impossible for thee to feel. It is indeed a melancholy circumstance for a poor Indian woman to serve her husband as a slave in the fields, wearied out with fatigue, and at home deprived of tranquillity—

* *Lastau, Mœurs des Sauvages. Borde, Relat. des Mœurs des Caraïbes. Voy. de Condamine. Voy. de P. Labat. Dumont, Mem. sur Louisiane. Barrere, Relat. de la France Equinoxiale, &c. Charlevoix, Hist. N. France.*

† A kind of beer or ale made of

maize, and very intoxicating.

yet, ah! how much more dreadful, when twenty years are elapsed, to see him take another woman, an untaught girl, to his arms!--To her he attaches himself: she beats us and our children; she commands us, and treats us as her servants; and if the least murmur escape us, a stick is raised--Oh! father, how is it possible that we should bear this condition!--What can an Indian woman do better than prevent her child from living in a state of servitude infinitely worse than death?--Would to God, O father! I repeat it, that my mother had conceived affection enough for me to bury me at the moment of my birth. My heart would not then have been thus afflicted, nor would mine eyes have been accustomed to tears*."

Among the several nations that wander about in those immense regions, there is one in which the nature of the soil has rendered the condition of the women less wretched. The people of this nation inhabit a cluster of islands formed by the different mouths of the Orinoco. Their country, though under water during the greater part of the year by the swelling of the river, and though overflowed at all times twice a-day by the tide, is preferred by them to any other. They have continued to live there without risk, by building their huts upon high stakes, which they sink into the mud. The palm-tree, which grows over this sandy soil, supplies these mild, chearful, and sociable savages with their food, drink, furniture, and canoes†.

The Orinoco, as we have had occasion to observe ‡, was discovered in 1498, by Columbus, who landed in the island of Trinidad, situated near its mouth; but other objects interfering, both that island and the coasts of the neighbouring continent were for a time neglected. It was not till 1535 that the Spaniards thought of paying another visit to the Orinoco; and being then disappointed in their search after mines, it was considered as of so little consequence, that they never formed above one settlement upon it. This is situated at the lower part of the river, and is called St. Thomas. The first colonists applied themselves with so much ardour to the cultivation of tobacco, that they delivered annually ten cargoes to the Dutch: but this intercourse having been prohibited by the mother-country, the town, which, to complete its misfortunes, has been twice sacked by privateers, and insensibly fell to decay; so that the whole employment of the colony at present is to breed a few cattle, which they send to Cumana by an inland communication.

The people who roved over the immense country that stretches from the Orinoco to the river of Amazons, before the arrival of the Europeans, and who still possess the greater part of it, are divided into several nations, none of which is very numerous. Their manners are in general the same as those of the other savages of South America; the Caribs excepted, who from their numbers and courage are more turbulent than the rest, and distinguished themselves by a

* El Orinoco ilustrado y defendido; Historia Natural, Civil y Geographica, &c. por el Padre Joseph Gumilla, de la Compagnia de Jesus, &c. Madrid, 1745, 2 vols. 4to.

† Id. ibid. Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIV. p. 344.

‡ Book I. chap. ii. p. 30.

remarkable custom in the choice of their chiefs. To be qualified to lead such a people to battle, it is not only necessary a man should have more strength, more courage, and more knowledge than the rest of his tribe; that he should be well acquainted with all the places for hunting and fishing, and with all the springs and roads, but that he should give evident and public proofs of his ability to sustain hardships and injuries.

All the trials customary in America, when a youth is admitted into the class of warriors, or when a warrior is promoted to the dignity of captain or chief, are accommodated to this idea of fortitude. They are not displays of valour, but of patience; they are not exhibitions of an ability to offend, but of a capacity to suffer. Of these the most remarkable is that among the Caribs. The warrior who aspires to the rank of captain, begins his probation with a long fast, more rigid than any ever observed by the most abstemious hermit. At the close of this the chiefs assemble: each gives him three lashes with a large whip, applied so vigorously that his body is almost flayed; and if he betrays the least symptoms of impatience or even sensibility, he is disgraced for ever, and rejected as unworthy of the honour. After some interval the constancy of the candidate is proved by a more excruciating trial. He is laid in a hammoc with his hands bound fast: an innumerable multitude of venomous ants, whose bite occasions exquisite pain, and produces a violent inflammation, are thrown upon him. The judges of his merit stand around the hammoc; and while these cruel insects fasten upon the most sensible parts of his body, a sigh, a groan, or an involuntary motion expressive of what he suffers, would exclude him from the dignity which he is ambitious to obtain. Even after this evidence of his fortitude, it is not deemed to be completely ascertained, but must stand another test more dreadful than any he has hitherto undergone. He is again suspended in his hammoc, and covered with leaves of the palmetto. A fire of stinking herbs is kindled underneath, so as he may feel its heat and be involved in its smoke. Though scorched, and almost suffocated, he must continue to endure with the same patient insensibility. Many perish in this rude essay of their firmness and courage; but such as go through it with applause, receive the ensigns of their new dignity with much solemnity, and are ever after regarded as leaders of approved resolution, whose behaviour, in the most trying situations will do honour to their country*.

Such were the original inhabitants of the greater part of Guiana, which was discovered 1499, by Alonso de Ojeda and Americus Vespucius. But this expedition, which we have already had occasion to mention †, afforded only a superficial knowledge of so vast a country. Many others were undertaken at a greater expence, but with still less success. They were, however, continued from a motive that ever did, and ever will deceive mankind. A report prevailed, which is scarcely yet exploded, that in the interior parts of Guiana there was a country, known by the name of *El Dorado*, where gold was found in the greatest profu-

* Gumilla, ubi sup.

† Book I. chap. ii. p. 33.

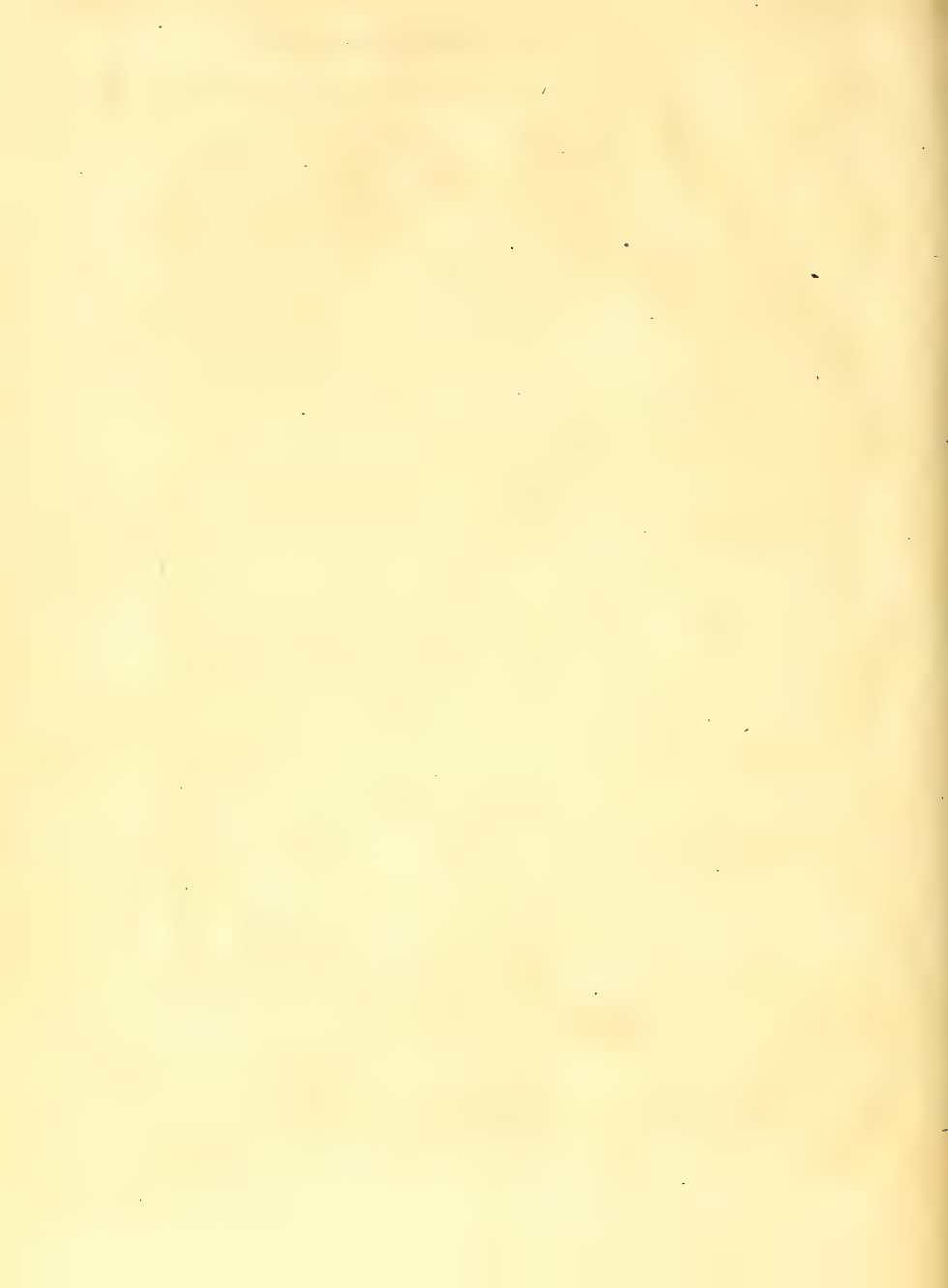


Benard delin.

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MALE & FEMALE INHABITANTS of GUINEA.

Published 30.th of Oct. 1778, by Flöding & Walker, Paternoster Row.



tion, and where a prince reigned who possessed more treasures than both Cortez and Pizarro had found in Mexico and Peru. This fable not only inflamed the ardent imagination of the Spaniards, but fired every nation in Europe. Sir Walter Raleigh in particular, one of the most extraordinary men that England ever produced, was seized with this enthusiasm, which he communicated to his countrymen. Passionately fond of every thing that was magnificent, he possessed a reputation that has seldom been enjoyed by the most exalted merit: he had acquired more knowledge than most of those whose immediate pursuit was learning; a freedom of thinking, uncommon in that age; to which was added, a romantic and enterprising turn of mind. This determined him, in 1595, to undertake, at his own expence, a voyage to Guiana. He visited several parts of the country, but discovered nothing relative to the object of his voyage. On his return, however, he published an account of his expedition, full of the most splendid fancies that ever amused the credulity of mankind*.

The French had not waited for this delusive relation to turn their views towards so celebrated a country: they had long before adopted the general prejudice, with a vivacity peculiar to themselves; and while the hopes of their rivals were engaged on the side of the Orinoco, they fought to realize their own expectations upon the river of Amazons. After many fruitless excursions, they at length settled on the island of Cayenne, in 1635. Some merchants of Rouen, thinking that settlement might prove advantageous, united their stock in 1643, and intrusted their affairs in the hands of a man of ferocious disposition, named Poncet de Bretigny, who having declared war both against the natives and colonists was soon massacred. This disaster having checked the ardour of the associates, a new company was established in 1651, which promised to be more considerable than the former. They set out with so large a capital, as to enable them to collect in Paris itself, seven or eight hundred colonists. These embarked on the Seine, in order to sail down to Havre de Grace; but unfortunately the virtuous Abbé de Marivault, who was the principal promoter of this undertaking, and who was to have had the management of it, as director-

* "Every one knows," says he, "the vast quantity of gold which the Spaniards have drawn from Peru: but I am convinced, that the prince who reigns at Manoa," the fabulous capital of El Dorado, "possesses infinitely more than they found in the whole New World." This prince he represents as a descendant of the Incas, as observing the same religion, and living in a stately palace, with all the magnificence of his ancestors. He gives an account of mountains and rocks of the colour of gold, and though he does not directly affirm they were entirely of that metal, he gives strong hints, that they may likely prove such. Relat. in Hackluyt's Collect. His motive for these brilliant lies seems to have been a desire of obtaining a commission from the crown to make discoveries in Guiana, and to enrich and aggrandise himself by committing depredations upon the Spanish settlements. Such a commission he obtained in 1618, and his conduct justifies the foregoing remark. Though England was then at peace with Spain, he immediately pillaged the town of St. Thomas, instead of going in quest of the gold mine, which he had proposed to the avidity of his followers. The clamorousness of these, disappointed in the booty, and otherwise deceived, induced captain Keymis, an old companion of Raleigh, who had favoured the cheat, to put an end to his life. Raleigh himself, less sensible to reproach, came home, and died upon a scaffold.

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general, was drowned as he was stepping into his boat. Roiville, a gentleman of Normandy, who was going over to Cayenne as general, was assassinated in the passage; and twelve of the principal adventurers, who were the perpetrators of this violent act, and had undertaken to put the colony in a flourishing condition, behaved there in a manner worthy of such an atrocious beginning. They hanged one of their number; two died; three were banished to a desert island: the rest abandoned themselves to every kind of excess. The commandant of the citadel deserted to the Dutch, with part of his garrison; and the remainder, such as had escaped hunger, poverty, and the fury of the savages, which had been roused by numberless provocations, thought themselves happy in being able to get over to the Leeward islands, in a boat and two canoes. They abandoned the fort, ammunition, arms, and merchandize, leaving also behind them the dead bodies of five or six hundred of their wretched companions, fifteen months after they had landed on the island.

In 1663, a new company was formed under the direction of La Barre, master of requests. Their capital did not exceed nine thousand pounds sterling. The assistance which they obtained from the ministry, however, enabled them to expel the Dutch; who, under the conduct of Spranger, had taken possession of the lands granted to them, after they had been evacuated by their countrymen. The year following, this inconsiderable body made part of the great company, which united the possessions and privileges of all the rest. Cayenne returned into the hands of government at that desirable period, which restored freedom to all the French colonies. It was taken in 1667 by the English, and in 1676 by the Dutch, since which time it has never been attacked.

This settlement, so often ruined was scarce re-established, when great hopes were entertained of its future prosperity. Some of the famous buccaniers, laden with the spoils which they had collected in the South Sea, came and fixed their residence there; and what was of yet greater consequence, resolved to employ their treasures in the cultivation of the lands. It was probable that their plan would have been prosecuted with vigour, because their means were great, and their spirits ardent. While this matter was in agitation, Ducaffe, one of their leaders, came with some ships, and proposed the plundering of Surinam. Their natural avidity was excited: they again became pirates, and almost all the inhabitants followed their example. The expedition proved unfortunate. Some of the besiegers fell in the attack; and the rest were taken prisoners, and sent to the Caribbee islands, where they settled*. The colony has never recovered this loss. Instead of extending into Guiana, it has not been in a prosperous state even at Cayenne.

This island, which may be about sixteen leagues in circumference, is only parted from the continent by two rivers. In consequence of a particular formation, rarely found in islands, the land is high near the water-side, and low in the

A. D. 1688.

* Nouvelle Relation de la France Equinoxiale, &c. par P. Barrere. Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XIV..

middle. Hence it is intersected by so many morasses, that all communication is impracticable, without taking a great circuit; and until the lands which are under water can be drained, and secured from future inundations by dykes properly raised, there is no place fit for culture except the rising grounds. Among these, some tracts of excellent soil are to be found, but the greater part is dry, sandy, and soon exhausted. The only town in the colony, which contains between an hundred and an hundred and fifty houses, is defended by a covert way, a large ditch, a very good mud rampart, five bastions, and a garrison of two hundred men. In the middle of the town is a pretty considerable eminence, of which a redoubt has been made, called the Fort, where forty or fifty men might capitulate, after the town had been taken. The entrance into the harbour is through a narrow channel, surrounded by rocks and reefs, so that ships can only get in at high water.

The first produce of Cayenne was the arnotto. This is a red dye, called by the Spaniards *achiote*, into which they dip the white wool, whatever colour they intend to give it. The tree that yields this dye has a reddish bark, and large, strong, and hard leaves, of a dark green colour. It is as high as a plum-tree, and more bushy. The flowers, which grow in bunches, not unlike roses, are succeeded twice a year by pods as prickly as the shell of a chestnut, but smaller. These pods contain little seeds of a pale red, which serve to make the arnotto. The process is as follows.

As soon as one of the eight or ten pods that grow in a bunch opens of itself, the rest may be gathered. All the seeds are then taken out, and thrown directly into large troughs full of water. When the fermentation begins, the seeds are bruised several times with wooden-pestles, till the skin is entirely taken off. The whole is then poured into large sieves, made of rushes, which retain all the solid parts, and let out a thick reddish, and foetid liquor into iron boilers prepared to receive it. While it boils the scum is skimmed off, and kept in large pans; and when the liquor yields no more scum, it is thrown away as useless, and the scum is poured back into the boiler. This scum, which is boiled for ten or twelve hours, must be constantly stirred with a wooden spatula, to prevent it from sticking to the boiler, or turning black. When it is boiled enough, and is somewhat hardened, it is spread upon boards to cool. It is afterwards made up into cakes of two or three pounds weight each, and then the whole process is finished.

From the culture of the arnotto, Cayenne proceeded to that of cotton, indigo, and sugar. It was the first of all the French colonies that attempted to raise coffee; the plants of which tree were brought thither from Surinam in 1721, by some deserters, who had taken refuge there, and purchased their pardon by this means. Some years after, plantations of cacao were begun; and in 1752, two hundred and sixty thousand five hundred and forty pounds of arnotto, eighty thousand three hundred and sixty-three pounds of sugar, seventeen thousand nine hundred and nineteen pounds of cotton, twenty-six thousand eight hundred and eighty pounds of coffee, nineteen thousand nine hundred and sixteen pounds

BOOK II. of cacao, six hundred and eight trees for timber, and one hundred and four planks, were exported from the settlement. All these articles were the result of the labour of ninety French families, an hundred and twenty-five Indians, and fifteen hundred negroes, which made up the whole colony*.

Weaker still was the state of Cayenne in 1763, when the court of Versailles, by a system that occasioned general astonishment, endeavoured to give it a degree of consequence to which it had not even aspired. France had then just emerged from the horrors of an unsuccessful war: the disagreeable situation of affairs had determined the ministry to purchase peace with the cession of several important colonies: it appeared equally necessary to make the nation forget her distresses, and the errors that had been the cause of them. The prospect of better fortune might amuse the people, and silence their clamours, if their attention was diverted from the possessions the nation had lost, and turned towards a new object. Guiana, it was pretended, would compensate all her misfortunes.

This vast region, which was long distinguished by the pompous name of Equinoxial France, was not the sole property of that power as she had formerly asserted. The Dutch, by settling to the north, and the Portuguese to the South, had confined the French between the rivers of Maroni and Vincent Pinzon, limits which were fixed by several treaties. These boundaries are equally distant from Cayenne, and the extent between them comprehends no less than an hundred leagues of the sea-coast. The navigation along this coast is extremely difficult, by reason of the rapidity of the currents, and is continually obstructed by small islands, banks of sand and hardened mud, and by strong mangroves, closely entangled, that extend two or three leagues into the sea. There is no harbour; few places where ships can land; and the lightest sloops often meet with insuperable obstructions. The large and numerous rivers that water this continent, are not more navigable. Their channel in many places is barricaded by vast rocks, which render it impossible to sail up the stream. The shore, which is generally flat, is overflowed in most parts by the spring tides, and the lands in the interior country, commonly become morasses in the rainy season. Then there is no safety but upon the higher grounds.

These inundations, however, that suspend all the labours of husbandry, contribute to render the heat more supportable, without producing that malignant influence upon the climate which might be apprehended from them. Uncertain conjectures only can be formed of the population of the inland parts: that of the sea coast may amount to nine or ten thousand men, divided into several nations, the most powerful of which are the Galibis. The missionaries, by great attention and perseverance, have found means to fix some of those roving nations, and even to reconcile them to the French, against whom they had, with reason, entertained the strongest prejudices. The first adventurers who resorted to this country, carried off by violence, or bought men, whom they condemned

* Id. *ibid.* Raynal, liv. xiii.

to the hardest labours of slavery on the very soil where they were born free, or sold them to the planters in the Caribbee islands. At first, their common price was sixteen pounds a head; but happily for the natives, these ravagers rose so much in their demands that no purchasers could be found. It was thought more advantageous to buy negroes, who were better able to undergo the labours of the field.

Guiana, such as here described, appeared a very valuable resource to the French ministry, reduced as they were to the necessity of correcting past errors, and of repairing if possible, past misfortunes. A few reflections will enable us to judge of their views.

It is of great importance to the southern colonies, especially those in the West-India islands, to have their resources for population and strength in the North, where they may exchange the articles of luxury for those of necessity, and keep open a communication that might afford them succours, in case they should be attacked. Before last war, the French southern colonies enjoyed this advantage. Canada, by its situation, the warlike genius of its inhabitants, their alliances with the Indian nations in friendship with the French, and fond of the freedom of their manners, might in some degree have balanced New England. The loss of that great continent determined the French ministry to seek for support from another. Guiana was thought a proper situation for this purpose, if a free and national population could there be established; a population, which might enable the colony to resist foreign attacks, and to furnish speedy assistance to the other colonies, if circumstances should require it.

Such evidently were the views of the court of Versailles. It was not imagined that Guiana could ever enrich the mother country by the produce of such commodities as are peculiar to the southern colonies, but that it might become a bulwark, and a necessary assistant, both in peace and war, to the French colonies in the West Indies. It was proposed to people those desert regions with free-men, not with slaves: but it was not considered, that Europeans could not undergo the fatigue of preparing lands under the torrid zone; or that men who quitted their own country only in hopes of living with greater satisfaction in another, would never accommodate themselves to the precarious subsistence of a savage life in a worse climate than that which they had left.

This wrong system, into which the government was drawn by a set of enterprising men, who were either misled by their presumption, or who sacrificed the public good to their own private views, was as extravagantly executed as it had been inconsiderately adopted. It is well known, that almost throughout the whole torrid zone, the year is divided into two seasons; the dry, and the rainy. In Guiana, such heavy rains fall from the beginning of November to the end of May, that the lands are either overflowed, or at least unfit for culture. Had the new colonists arrived there in the beginning of the dry season, and been placed on the lands destined for them, they would have had time to put their habitations in order; to cut down or burn the woods, and to plough and sow their

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their lands : but from want of this necessary foresight, they were transported thither in the very middle of the rainy season.

The island of Cayenne might have been a proper place for the reception and refreshment of the new settlers, till such time as they could have been disposed of : there they might have found lodging and subsistence ; but the false opinion which prevailed, that the new colony must not be intermixed with the old, deprived them of this resource. In consequence of that prejudice twelve thousand men, devoted to destruction, were landed on the banks of the river Kourou, on a ridge of sand amid a number of unwholesome little islands, and only sheltered under a miserable awning. In this situation, totally inactive, and weary of existence, they gave themselves up to all the irregularities that idleness infallibly produces among men of the lowest class, far removed from their native country, and placed under a foreign sky. They fell into a state of extreme misery : they were seized with contagious distempers, the necessary consequences of such a condition ; and their wretched life was at length terminated in all the horrors of despair. In order to complete this mournful tragedy, fifteen hundred men who had escaped the common mortality, were washed away by the floods. Distributed upon different lands, that were overflowed at the return of the rains, they all perished, without leaving behind them the least trace of their memory *.

The Dutch, who seem to have been born to derive benefit from marshes, and who are equally capable of converting the good or bad fortune of others to their own advantage, have been more successful in cultivating their portion of this continent. They are in possession of a large territory, which is separated from French Guiana by the river Maroni, and by that of Poumaron from Spanish Guiana. It is known by the name of Surinam, the most ancient and most important settlement in the colony. The foundation of it was laid in 1640 by the French, whose activity carried them at that time into a variety of climates, and whose sickleness suffered them not to settle in any. They abandoned Surinam a few years after they arrived there, and were succeeded by the English, whose diligence began to be attended with some success, when they were attacked by the Dutch ; who finding them dispersed over a vast tract of land, experienced little difficulty in mastering them. Some years after they were, to the number of twelve hundred ; transported to Jamaica, the colony being formally ceded to the republic by the peace of Breda.

A. D. 1668.

The Dutch, whose sole occupation was commerce, had not the least taste for agriculture. Surinam was accordingly for some time a monument of the prejudices of its new masters. At length the West-India company, who governed the country, cut down the woods, divided part of the land among the inhabitants, and furnished them with slaves. All persons who were desirous of occupying these lands, obtained grants of them upon an engagement to pay by installments out of their produce, the price at which the lot was valued : and they

* Raynal, liv. xiii.

had the further privilege of disposing of them to any purchaser, who would agree to pay what part of the original debt remained due.

The success of these first settlements gave rise to a great many others. By degrees they extended to twenty leagues distance from the mouth of the river Surinam, and of the Commewine, which runs into it; and they would have advanced much farther, if they had not been checked by the fugitive negroes, who, taking refuge in inaccessible forests, where they have recovered their liberty, never cease to infect the back parts of the colony. The difficulties which attended the clearing of these lands, required that uncommon resolution which is ready to attempt, and that perseverance which is capable of surmounting every thing. The greater part of the lands that were to be made fit for cultivation, were covered with water every tide to the depth of four or five feet; but by making great numbers of ditches and sluices, the planters succeeded in draining off the moisture; and thus the glory of setting bounds to the ocean, was acquired by the Dutch in the New World, as it had been before in the Old. They contrived even to give to their plantations that neatness which is every where characteristic of the people, and such conveniencies as are not to be found in the most flourishing either of the French or English settlements.

One of the principal causes of the prosperity of this colony has been the extreme ease with which the settlers procured money to carry on their works. They raised as much as they had occasion for at the rate of six per cent. but under an express condition, that their plantations should be mortgaged to their creditors, and that they should be obliged to deliver to them their whole produce, at the price current in the colony, till such time as the debt should be entirely discharged. With the assistance of these loans, they formed on the banks of the Surinam, or at a little distance from it, four hundred and twenty five plantations; upon which, in 1762, were eighty four thousand five hundred negroes, and four thousand white men as overseers. Among the latter are included French refugees, Moravians, and a very considerable number of Jews.

There is perhaps no country upon the face of the earth, where the unhappy descendants of Abraham are so well treated as at Surinam. They are not only permitted to enjoy the exercise of their religion, the propriety of lands, and the determination of such disputes as may arise among themselves: they are likewise suffered to participate in the common right of citizens; to have a share in the general administration of affairs, and to vote in the election of public magistrates. So great is the influence of the spirit of trade, that it forces all national and religious prejudices to submit to that general interest, which should be the bond of union among mankind. On this subject one cannot help exclaiming, in the words of Raynal*, "What are those ideal nominal distinctions of religion or country?—Miserable inhabitants of a spot which ye cultivate with so much toil and sorrow!—are ye not all men?—Why then do ye drive each other from a world, where ye live but for an instant?—and what a life too is it,

* *Hist. Philos. &c.* liv. xii.

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that ye have the folly and cruelty to dispute with each other the enjoyment of!—Is it not sufficient that the elements, the heavens, and even the earth, fight against you, but ye must add to those scourges of nature, the abuse of that little strength which she has left you to resist them?"

Paramaribo, the principal place in the colony of Surinam, is a small town, pleasantly situated upon the river. The houses are handsome and convenient, though only built of wood, on a foundation of European bricks. Its port, which is five leagues distant from the sea, has every requisite that can be desired. It is the rendezvous of all the ships dispatched from the mother-country to receive the produce of the colony. The success of this establishment suggested in 1732, the idea of forming another upon the river Berbice, which falls into the sea nineteen leagues west of the Surinam. The shores at its mouth were so marshy, that it was found necessary to go fifteen leagues up the country, in order to form plantations on its banks. A nation that had made even the sea habitable, it can hardly be supposed would be deterred by such an obstacle: a new company had the glory of raising new productions in a soil taken from the bed of the ocean, and the oar gave place to the plough-share. The same prodigy has since been attempted by another association, and with the same success, on the Demerary and Essequibé, which fall into the same bay at twenty leagues distance from the Berbice, and upon the Poumaron, at fifteen leagues from the Essequibé, and twenty-five from the principal mouth of the Orinoco. The two last settlements will probably some time or other equal that of Surinam, but at present they are not supposed to contain above twelve hundred free persons, at the head of twenty-eight or thirty thousand slaves.

These three settlements produce exactly the same articles; cotton, cacao, and sugar. Though the last of these is by much the most considerable, the quantity does not correspond either to the number of hands, or the expence of culture. This defect no doubt arises from the nature of the soil, which is marshy, and by its superabundant humidity drowns or washes away the vegetable salts of the cane. The little profit which they made by it induced the planters to turn their thoughts towards some other object; accordingly, about the beginning of the present century, they began the cultivation of the coffee-tree.

This tree, originally the produce of Arabia, where nature, sparing of the necessities of life, scatters its luxuries with a lavish hand, was long peculiar to that happy country. The unsuccessful attempts made by the Europeans in the cultivation of it, induced them to believe that the inhabitants of Arabia steeped the fruit in boiling water, or dried it in the oven before they sold it, in order to secure to themselves a trade from which they derived their chief wealth. They continued in this error, till the Dutch had conveyed the tree itself first to Batavia, and afterwards to Surinam. Then they were convinced by experience, that the seed of the coffee-tree, like that of many others, will never produce a proper plant, unless put fresh into the ground. The fruit of this tree resembles a cherry. It grows in clusters, and is ranged along the branches under the axillæ of the leaves, which are of the same colour and form as those of the laurel, but somewhat

what longer. When the fruit becomes of a deep red, it is gathered, and carried to the mill.

This mill is composed of two wooden rollers, furnished with two plates of iron, eighteen inches long, and ten or twelve in diameter. These are moveable, and made to approach a third, which is fixed, and is called the Chops. Above the rollers is a hopper, in which they put the coffee, whence it falls between the rollers and the chops, where it is stripped of its first skin, and divided into two parts, as may be seen by its form after it has undergone this operation, being flat on one side and round on the other. From this machine it falls into a brass sieve, where the skin drops between the wires, while the fruit slides over them into baskets placed ready to receive it. It is then thrown into a vessel full of water, where it soaks for one night, and is afterwards thoroughly washed. When the whole is finished, and well dried, it is put into another machine, called the Peeling-mill. This is a wooden grinder, which is turned vertically upon its trundle by a mule or horse. In passing over the dried coffee it takes off the parchment, which is nothing but a thin skin that detaches itself from the berry, in proportion as it grows dry. The parchment being removed, the coffee is taken out of this mill to be winnowed in another, called the Winnowing-mill. This machine is provided with four pieces of tin fixed upon an axle, which is turned by a slave with considerable force; and the wind that is made by the motion of these plates, clears the coffee from all the pellicles that are mixed with it. It is afterwards put upon a table, where the broken berries, and any refuse that may happen to be left, are separated from it by negroes. After these repeated operations, the coffee is fit for sale.

The coffee-tree flourishes only in those climates where the winters are extremely mild. It particularly delights in mountains and high grounds, where its root is almost always dry, and its head frequently watered with gentle showers. It prefers a western aspect, and ploughed ground, without any appearance of grass. The plants should be placed at eight feet distance from each other, and in holes twelve or fifteen inches deep. If left to themselves, they would rise to the height of twenty feet; but they are commonly stunted to five, for the sake of gathering their fruit with greater ease. Thus dwarfed, they extend their branches in such a manner, that they cover the whole spot round about them.

The coffee-tree blossoms in the months of December, January, and February, according to the temperature of the air or the season for rain, and bears in October or November. It begins to yield fruit the third year, but is not in full bearing till the fifth. With the same infirmities to which most other trees are subject, the coffee-tree is likewise in danger of being destroyed by a worm that pierces its root, or by the intense rays of the sun, which are as fatal to it as to the human species. The length of its life depends upon the quality of the soil in which it is planted. The hills, where it is chiefly found, have gravelly or chalky bottoms. In the first it languishes for some time, and then dies; in the second its roots, which seldom fail of striking betwixt the stones, obtain nourishment, invigorate the trunk, and keep the tree alive and fruitful for thirty years.

This is nearly the period for plants of the coffee-tree. The proprietor at the end of this term not only finds himself without trees, but his land is so much reduced, that it is not fit for any kind of culture. One may fairly say he has sunk his capital for an income of a very short continuance: and if his situation happens to be in an island entirely inclosed and occupied, his loss is not to be repaired; but upon an open and widely extended continent, he may make himself amends for a spot totally exhausted by a tract of unappropriated and unbroken virgin-land, which he has it in his option to clear.

This advantage has contributed amazingly to multiply the coffee plantations in that part of Guiana which belongs to the Dutch. The single colony of Surinam furnished in 1768, one hundred thousand weight of cotton, two hundred thousand of cacao, fourteen millions of coffee, and twenty-eight millions six hundred thousand of raw sugar. Seventy ships were freighted with those commodities, in order to carry them to the mother country. It is not possible for the author to determine, with the same precision, the produce of the other colonies, but he may venture to settle it at one-fourth part. It will increase annually. Every species of culture that the Dutch have undertaken will be extended and improved. They will perhaps attempt new ones; at least they will resume that of indigo, which a few unsuccessful experiments induced them to abandon without sufficient reason.

It is true that the coast, which is seventy-six leagues in extent, does not afford a single spot for a plantation. The land throughout is low, and generally under water; but the great rivers upon which settlements have been begun to be made, and the least of which is navigable for more than thirty leagues, offer a strong invitation to the enterprising adventurer to come and enrich himself on their banks. The country that lies between these is fruitful, and washed by smaller rivers, which are, however, large enough to carry sloops. The only obstacle to great success is the climate. The year is divided between continual rains and excessive heats. The crops, which cost the planters vast pains to raise, cannot be preserved, without the utmost difficulty, from swarms of disgusting reptiles; and they themselves are exposed successively to the languors of the dropy, and to fevers of every kind.

These are no doubt the reasons which have induced the principal proprietors of Dutch Guiana to reside in Europe: hence there are scarcely to be found in the colony any inhabitants but the factors of those wealthy men, and such proprietors, whose fortunes being too moderate to intrust the care of their plantations to other hands, as are obliged to live in the country. The consumption of the colony cannot therefore be large; accordingly the vessels which are sent from the mother country to bring home the produce, carry out nothing but absolute necessities. At most the articles of luxury are few.


Even this scanty supply the Dutch traders are forced to share with the English of North America, who were at first admitted only because the colony was under a necessity of purchasing horses of them. The difficulty of breeding, and perhaps other causes, have established this permission. The conveyance of horses

is so necessary a passport for men, that a ship which does not carry a number proportioned to its size, is not permitted to enter the harbours of Dutch Guiana. But if the horses happen to die in the passage, it is sufficient to produce their heads, in order to entitle the owners to expose to sale such other commodities as they have on board. There is a law forbidding payments to be made otherwise than by barter of molasses and rum, but this law is little regarded. The English, who have assumed the right of importing thither whatever they please, take care to export the most valuable commodities of the colony, and even exact payments in money or bills of exchange upon Europe.

By considering the dangers to which Dutch Guiana may be exposed, we shall be able to acquire some idea of its present strength. In the first place, an invasion by any of the European powers might be easily effected. The largest ships could enter the river Pomaron, the mouth of which has seven or eight fathom depth of water, that gradually increases to forty fathom, at the distance of four or five leagues. The little fort of New Zealand, which protects the banks, could not withstand a vigorous cannonading for two hours. The entrance of the Demerary, which has from eighteen to twenty and twenty-four fathom of water, and has not less than fifteen or sixteen throughout the space of four leagues, and which is totally defenceless, would be still more easy. The outlet of the Essequibé, which is three leagues in breadth, is filled with small islands and shallows; but here, as well as along the course of the river, are found channels deep enough to bring the largest ships up to an island ten leagues distant from the sea, and defended only by a miserable redoubt. Though the river Berbice, which is one league broad, can scarcely admit the smallest vessels, they would carry sufficient force to reduce fort Nassau, and the scattered settlements on both its banks. In a word, all the western part of Dutch Guiana is scarcely in a condition to resist the attack of a stout privateer, and would infallibly be obliged to capitulate on the sight of the most contemptible squadron.

The eastern part, which, by reason of its wealth, is exposed to greater danger, is better defended. The entrance of the river Surinam is not very practicable, on account of its sand-bank. Ships, however, that do not draw more than twenty feet of water, can come in at flood. At two leagues from its mouth, the Commewine joins the Surinam. This point of union the Dutch have chiefly fortified: they have erected a battery on the Surinam, another on the right bank of the Commewine, and on the left bank a citadel called Amsterdam. These works form a triangle; and their guns, which cross each other, are contrived to have the double effect of preventing ships from proceeding further up one river, and from entering the other. The citadel is seated in the midst of a morass, and is inaccessible, except by a narrow causeway, entirely commanded by the artillery. It requires no more than eight or nine hundred men to garrison it completely. It is flanked with four bastions, and surrounded with a mud rampart, a wide ditch full of water, and a good covered way; but it is unprovided with powder magazines, has no vaults, nor any kind of casemate. Three leagues higher on the Surinam is a close battery, intended to cover the

harbour

BOOK II.  harbour and town of Paramaribo. It is called Fort Zeland. A battery of the same kind, named Sommefwelt Fort, covers the Commewine at nearly the same distance. The forces of the colony consist of its militia, and twelve hundred regulars; one half of whose pay is supplied by the inhabitants, and the other by the West India company.

This number of men would be more than sufficient, if they had nothing to guard against but the efforts of the natives. The Indians, who endeavoured to keep possession of such places as suited the Dutch; have been exterminated. The rest kept retreating farther into the country, in proportion as they found the Europeans encroaching upon them; and now live quietly in those woods, which by serving them as an asylum, are become as dear to them as the habitations from which they were expelled. But the colony of Surinam is not equally secure in regard to the negroes. When these miserable beings are brought from Africa for sale, they are placed one after another upon a table, and examined with the most minute attention by a surgeon employed by the government. According to his report, the prices are settled, and the money is usually paid at the end of three weeks. The purchaser, however, has four and twenty hours allowed him to judge, from his own observation, of the goodness of his bargain; and if within that time he is dissatisfied with the choice he has made, he has a right to return the slaves without any ceremony or indemnification, provided he has not put his seal upon them. This seal is a silver plate, on which are engraved the initials of his christian and surname. After being heated, it is applied to the arm or breast of the slave; and the marks thus burned in can never be effaced. The use of this barbarous practice is to enable the planters to distinguish those slaves, whose features are not sufficiently marked for European eyes to recognize their identity.

Nothing is more uncommon in the Dutch settlements than to see a slave made free. He cannot obtain his liberty but by becoming a Christian; and before the priest is authorized to administer baptism to him, letters of freedom must be purchased, which cost between seventeen and eighteen pounds sterling. Security must also be given for his maintenance during life, lest he should become a burden to the company, or be induced to increase the number of the enemies of the colony, already too great. When to these expences we add the loss of the original purchase money, we will not be surprised that the enfranchisement of a slave should be very uncommon among a people whose ruling passion is avarice.

The planters in Dutch Guiana, are so far from giving way to such acts of humanity, that they have carried oppression to infinitely greater lengths than those to which it has been extended in the islands. The opportunities of desertion on a continent of immense extent, is probably in some measure the cause of this extraordinary barbarity towards the negroes. On the slightest suspicion a slave is put to death by his master in the presence of all his companions. But this is done without the knowledge of the white people, who might give evidence against him for so flagrant a breach of the rights of civil authority;

city; whereas the negroes not being permitted to give testimony, their being present is of no sort of consequence, unless to impress them with sentiments of terror, and make them tremble with more abject timidity at the frown of their tyrants.

The mother country winks at this cruelty; and by its shameful connivance, risks the loss of a beneficial settlement. Fear is sometimes roused by the convulsions of despair, and vengeance lurks in the heart of the oppressed and insulted negro. There has often been reason to apprehend a revolution; but the danger was never so great or imminent as in 1763, when an insurrection broke out, which by its example and consequences, might have produced the most fatal effects throughout all the American settlements. Seventy-three blacks suddenly assembled in one house at Berbice, murdered their master, and sent abroad the cry of liberty. At this sound, courage and hope revived and animated the whole body of slaves. They united to the number of nine thousand, and in the first transports of their fury fell upon all the white people that they met. Such as escaped were obliged to take refuge on board a brigantine at the lower part of the river. In the mean time five hundred men arrived from Surinam to their assistance: they were enabled to land, and entrenched themselves in an advantageous post, till the arrival of some troops from Europe.

Fortunately for the republic, the English at Barbadoes, who are in possession of most of the plantations formed on the Pomaron, Demerary, and Essequébé, sent in time a sufficient force to keep the slaves on these two rivers in order; and by a still more fortunate occurrence, the people of Surinam, at this very time, concluded a treaty which they had on foot with the negroes who had taken refuge in the neighbouring woods. Ignorant of a commotion that might have proved so favourable to them, they agreed not to receive among them any fugitives of their own nation. This stipulation deprived the rebels of their principal resource; and by such a combination of unexpected events, they were again reduced to a state of servitude. The greatest part of them being without arms, they eagerly embraced the offer of a capitulation with their masters. They have since, however, given proofs of that inextinguishable hatred prevailing in their souls, which never fails to resist oppression. The tranquility of Dutch Guiana, in a word, like that of all other countries where rebellion has once broke out, is more apparent than real: the seeds of treason are ripening in secret within the forests of Auka and Sarmaka.

In these deserts, which are peopled with all the slaves that have fled from the yoke of the covetous Hollander, a species of republic has grown up, composed of fifteen or sixteen thousand inhabitants, divided among several villages, each of which chuses a chief for itself. These wandering clans fall unexpectedly, sometimes upon one side of the colony, sometimes upon another, in order to carry off supplies for their own subsistence, and to lay waste the fields of their former tyrants. It is in vain that the troops are kept continually upon the watch, to check or surprise so dangerous an enemy. By means of private information, they contrive to escape every snare, and direct their incursions to-

wards those parts which happen to be left defenceless. Conventions and treaties are no security against their attacks.

The wisdom and moderation of the Dutch, who have inconsiderately rendered the load of servitude so oppressive to the negroes, is therefore deeply interested to prevent a general revolution, of which they would be the first victims. They have already been guilty of many oversights. They have not bestowed on their American settlements that attention which they deserved, although they have met with strokes so severe, and so closely following upon each other, as ought to have opened their eyes. If they had not been blinded by the rapidity of their success, they would have discovered the beginning of their ruin in the final loss of Brazil. Deprived of that rich country, which in their hands might have become the most flourishing colony in the universe, and might have atoned for the insufficiency of their territory in Europe, they saw themselves reduced to their original condition, as a trading people, of being factors for other nations. Thus was created, in their mass of real wealth, a void which has never yet been filled up.

The consequences of the Act of Navigation passed in England, were no less fatal to the Dutch. From that time Great Britain, ceasing to be tributary to the trade of the republic, became her rival, and in a short time acquired a decisive superiority over her in Asia, Africa, and America. Had other nations adopted the policy of England, Holland must have sunk under the stroke. Happily for her their rulers were less attentive to the prosperity of the people. Every government, however, in proportion as it has become more enlightened, has assumed to itself its own branches of commerce. Each step that has been taken for this purpose has been an additional check upon the Dutch; and we may presume from the present state of things, that sooner or later every people will establish a navigation for themselves, suited to the nature of their country, and to the extent of their industry. To this period the course of events in all nations seems to tend; and whensoever it shall arrive, the Dutch, who are indebted for their success as much to the indolence and ignorance of their neighbours, as to their own economy and experience, will find themselves reduced to their original state of poverty.

If the republic should ever find herself in this situation, her great resource will be in agriculture. This, however, though capable of improvement in the country of Breda, Boi-le-Duc, Zutphen, and Gueldres, can never become very considerable. The territory belonging to the United Provinces is so small, that it will almost justify the saying of the Grand Segnior, who hearing with what obstinacy the Dutch and Spaniards disputed the possession of it, declared that, if it belonged to him, he would order his pioneers to throw it into the sea. The soil is good for nothing but fish; which, before the Dutch, were its only tenants. It has been said, with no less truth than energy, that the four elements were but in embryo there. The produce of the lands will never be sufficient to maintain one fourth part of the two millions of people which at present inhabit it.

It cannot therefore be by her European possessions that the republic can expect to be preserved. She may depend with more reason upon those in America. The countries which she holds in that quarter of the globe, are all under the influence of monopolies. Her islands in the American Archipelago, as well as her factories in Africa, depend upon the West India company; the credit of which, since the loss of Brazil, has sunk so prodigiously, that their stock sells at near sixty per cent. under par. Surinam, which was taken by some private ships fitted out in Zeland, was ceded by the states of that province to the same company; who having still their imagination filled with the idea of their ancient grandeur, undertook without hesitation the management of that territory; but upon serious reflection they found, that the expence necessary to put it in such a state as to yield them any advantage, was far too great for their exhausted finances. They therefore gave up a third of their property to the city of Amsterdam, and another third to an opulent individual of the name of Daarffens. The two other Dutch colonies in Guiana are likewise under the controul of trading companies, to which they owe their foundation.

Not one of these societies is in possession of a single ship, or carries on any sort of trade. The navigation of the American settlements is therefore open to every member of the community: under this whimsical and oppressive condition, however, that every ship, bound for Surinam and Berbice, shall sail from Amsterdam; those for Essequébé from Zeland; and that they shall return into the same ports from which they sailed. The care of the companies is confined to the government, and the defence of the territories submitted to their jurisdiction; and in order to enable them to support these expences, the republic authorises them to impose taxes of different kinds. All commodities imported into the colonies, or exported from them, pay large duties. Slaves, on their arrival, are subject to much larger; and there is a tax upon both blacks and whites from three years of age. Foreigners only are exempted from this shameful tribute. When an estate is transferred, both the buyer and the seller are subject to a considerable fine. Every manufacturer, be his industry ever so great, is obliged to give in an account of his gains upon oath; and the impost is regulated according to the amount of his profits. After the public expences are defrayed, the remainder of the revenue, which the weakness or corruption of the sovereign power has suffered to become too exorbitant, is divided among the members of the different companies.

Every wise government has discovered the disadvantages of leaving their American possessions in the hands of particular societies, whose private interests do not always coincide with that of the public. They have considered their subjects in the New World as having an equal right with those in the Old, to be governed not by partial but by general laws: they have been of opinion, that their colonies make a more rapid progress under the immediate protection of the state, than under that of a middle agent; and the event has demonstrated, more or less in all cases, the justness of these reflections. Holland is the only power that has not adopted so simple and rational a plan, though every circumstance con-

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curred to make it more necessary to her than to other states. The greater part of her settlements, as already observed, are without any defence against a foreign force, and are in continual danger of insurrections from the cruel treatment of the slaves. That disinclination which a people merely commercial naturally have to the improvement of land, is strengthened in the colonies by the abuses inseparable from the form of government there established; and the means of creating a new order of things in them are not within the reach of the authority, protection, or activity of a private society. Revolutions of such magnitude cannot be brought about but by the immediate superintendence of government.

If the republic shall adopt the resolution which her most important interests require, she will cease to depend solely for her existence upon a precarious industry, some branches of which she is every day losing, and which sooner or later she must lose entirely. Her American colonies, which comprehend every advantage that a mercantile nation, also engaged in agriculture, can desire, will furnish productions, the whole profits and property of which will centre in her. By her territorial acquisitions she will be enabled, in every market, to rival those nations whose commodities she formerly served only to convey. In a word, Holland will cease to be a warehouse, and become a state.



T H E

H I S T O R Y

O F

A M E R I C A.

B O O K III.

The WEST INDIES, or GREAT AMERICAN ARCHIPELAGO.

C H A P. I.

A general View of the West India Islands, with an Account of the Manners and Customs of the Caribs, of the Rise and Dispersion of the Buccaneers, and of the principal military Transactions of the European Powers in these Latitudes.

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This archipelago, according to the theory of Buffon, as well as that of the East Indies, situated nearly in the same latitude, seems to have been produced by the motion of the sea from east to west;—a motion produced by the same cause



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which occasions the earth's revolution from west to east; more rapid at the equator, where the globe of the earth being more elevated, revolves in a larger circle, and in a more agitated zone, and where the ocean seems as it were wishing to break through all the boundaries which nature opposes to its fury. All the shores that look towards the east, as well as the islands, bear marks of this continual action. The Caribbees, in particular, appear only to be the summits of mountains. the lower chain of which is at present under water. This will be illustrated by a short description.

The direction of the West India islands, beginning at Tobago, is nearly north and north-west. This direction is continued from one island to another, forming a line somewhat curved towards the north-east, and ending at Antigua. There the line becomes at once curved, and extending itself in a straight direction to the west and north west, meets in its course with Porto Rico, Hispaniola, and Cuba, which are separated from each other by channels of various breadths. Some of these are six, others fifteen or twenty leagues broad; but the soundings in all of them are from an hundred to an hundred and twenty, or an hundred and fifty fathom. Between Grenada and St. Vincent lies a cluster of small islands, known by the name of the Grenadines, where, in some places, the soundings are not ten fathom.

The mountains in the West India islands run in the same direction as the islands themselves. This direction is so regular, that if the tops of these mountains were considered independent of their bases, they might be looked upon a chain of hills belonging to the continent, of which Martinico would be the most north-westerly ridge. The springs of water which flow from the mountains in the Windward islands run all in the western parts of those islands. The whole eastern coast is without any running water. These observations, which seem to prove, that the sea has separated the West India islands from the continent, are farther confirmed by others of a different kind, though equally conclusive in support of this conjecture. Tobago, Margarett, and Trinidad, the islands that are nearest to the continent on the south, produce trees whose wood is soft, and wild cacao, which are rarely found in the more northern islands. In these all the wood is hard. Cuba, situated at the other extremity of the archipelago, abounds like Florida, from which perhaps it has been severed, with cedars and cypresses.

The soil of the West India islands consists chiefly of a layer of clay and gravel, under which is a bed of stone or rock. The nature of some of these soils is better adapted to vegetation than others. In those places where the soil is drier, and more friable, and mixes with the leaves and remains of plants, a layer of earth is formed of greater depth, than where the clay is moister. The sand or gravel has different properties, according to its peculiar nature. Wherever it is less hard, less compact, or less porous, small pieces separate themselves from it; which, though dry, preserve a certain degree of coolness, useful to vegetation. Where the clay and gravel do not go through such modifications, the soil becomes barren, as soon as the layer formed by the decomposition of the original plants is destroyed. This is occasioned by the necessity of weed-
ing

ing it, which too frequently expose its salts to the heat of the sun. Hence, in those cultures which require less weeding, and where the plant covers with its leaves the vegetable salts, the fertility of the soil has been preserved*.

The climate, in all the West India islands, is nearly the same, allowing for those accidental differences, which the several qualities of the lands themselves produce. The inhabitants distinguish only two seasons, the dry and the rainy. Nature, whose operations are unremitted, appears to them to act always uniformly; but those who attentively observe her progress, discern that, in the temperature of the climate, as well as in all the revolutions and changes of vegetation, she observes the same laws as in Europe, though in a less sensible manner. These changes, however, are no preservative against the dangers and inconveniences of such a scorching sun, as must naturally be expected under the torrid zone. As those islands lie chiefly between the Equator and the tropic of Cancer, the inhabitants are continually exposed to an almost insupportable heat. This heat is moderated rather by the winds than the changes in the seasons. Those which blow from the south and west afford some relief, but they are much less frequent and regular than that which comes from the east.

The easterly wind depends upon two invariable causes. The first arises from the diurnal motion of the earth, from west to east, which must necessarily be more rapid under the equinoctial, because a greater space must be passed over in the same time. The second is owing to the heat of the sun, which, as soon as it rises above the horizon, rarifies the air, and causes it to blow towards the west, in proportion as the earth revolves towards the east. The easterly wind, therefore, which in the West India islands is scarcely felt before nine in the morning, increases as the sun rises above the horizon, and decreases as it declines. Towards evening it ceases entirely to blow on the coasts, but not on the open sea. The causes of this difference are very evident. After the setting of the sun, the air from the land, which continues for a considerable time rarified, on account of the vapours that are continually rising from the heated globe, necessarily flows back upon the air of the sea. This is what is generally called a *land-breeze*, in opposition to the former, which is termed a *sea-breeze*. The land-breeze is most sensibly felt during the night; and continues, till the air of the sea, rarified by the heat of the sun, flows back again towards the land, where the air has been condensed by the coolness of the night. It has also been observed, that the easterly wind blows more regularly, and with greater force in the dog-days, than at any other time of the year, because the sun then acts more powerfully upon the air. Thus nature causes the excessive heat of the sun to contribute to the refreshment of those climates that are parched by his rays.

The rain also contributes to the temperature of the West India islands, though not equally in them all. In those places where the easterly wind meets with nothing to oppose its progress, it disperses the clouds as they begin to rise, and causes them to break either in the woods or upon the mountains; but wherever the

* Du Tertre. Labat. Dufrenoy. Ruyal

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storms are too violent, or where the blowing of the easterly wind is interrupted by the changeable and temporary effect of the southern and westerly winds, it then begins to rain. In other islands, where the east wind does not generally blow, the rains are so frequent and plentiful, especially in the winter season, which lasts from the middle of July to the middle of October, that, according to the most accurate observations, as much water falls in one week, during this time, as in most European climates in the space of a year. Our heaviest rains are but dews, compared with those in the West Indies, which are rather torrents of water, poured from the clouds with vast impetuosity.

These rains, so salutary against the heat, are accompanied with all the inconveniencies of moisture, and attended with effects no less disagreeable than fatal. The dead must be interred within a few hours after they have expired; meat will not keep fresh above four and twenty hours; the fruits suddenly decay, whether they are gathered ripe or before their maturity; the bread must be made into biscuits, in order to prevent it from growing mouldy; common wines soon become sour, and iron rusts in a few days. The seeds cannot be preserved without great attention and care, till the proper season returns for sowing them. When the West India islands were first discovered, the corn that was conveyed thither for the support of those who could not accustom themselves to the food of the natives was so soon damaged, that it became necessary to send it in the ear. This precaution enhanced the price of it to such a degree that few people were able to buy it. Flour was then substituted in place of corn; which lowered, indeed, the expences of freight, but was attended with a new inconvenience: it was sooner damaged. While things were in this disagreeable state, it was happily imagined by a merchant, that if the flour were entirely separated from the bran, which contributes to its fermentation, it would be attended with a double advantage: it might be sold cheaper, and would keep longer. He accordingly caused it to be sifted, and put the finest flour into strong casks, and beat it close together with iron hammers, till it became so firm a body that the air could scarce enter it. Experience justified so rational a contrivance. The practice, improved, has become general. By this means flour may be kept for the space of six months, a year, or even longer; an interval sufficient for the activity and industry of the mother-country to supply its colonies.

How troublesome soever these natural effects of the periodical rains may be, they are connected with some still more terrible. Of these the most destructive is the hurricane. The hurricane is a violent wind, generally accompanied with rain, lightning and thunder; sometimes with an earthquake: and it is always attended with the most fatal consequences that the fury of the elements can produce. The sky, which in the torrid zone is usually clear, is suddenly changed into a dark and universal night; and the appearance of a perpetual spring into the dreariness and horror of the most gloomy winter. Trees as old as the world are torn up by the roots, and instantly disappear; the strongest and most solid buildings are in a moment buried in ruins: where the eye delighted itself with the prospect of rich and verdant hills, nothing is to be seen but plantations entirely

tirely destroyed, and frightful caverns; whole fields of sugar canes being whirled into the air, and scattered over the face of the country. The labours of many years are destroyed, and the hopes of the planter perish, at the very time when he thinks himself beyond the reach of fortune. Deprived of their sole support, the unhappy sufferers weep over the carcasses of the dead, or search among the ruins for their friends and relations. The noise of the waters, of the woods, and of the winds, accompanied with the dreadful shock of the thunder; the cries and howlings of men and animals, promiscuously involved in a whirlwind of sand, stones, and ruins of buildings!—all these horrors combined seem to portend the last struggles of expiring nature.

Hurricanes, however, though accompanied with so many awful circumstances, and though in many respects so destructive, contribute to the production of more plentiful crops, and to ripen the fruits of the earth. Whether these violent concussions tear up the ground, in order to render it more fertile, or whether the hurricane brings along with it certain substances fit to promote the vegetation of plants, is not easy to determine; but it has been observed, that this seeming evil, and temporary confusion, is not only a consequence of the uniformity of nature, which makes even dissolution itself instrumental to regeneration, but also the means of preserving the universal system, the life and vigour of which is maintained by an internal fermentation, the source of partial ill and of general good*.

The original inhabitants of the West-India islands pretend to foretel, by infallible prognostics, the approach of this dreadful phenomenon. They affirm, That when it is near at hand, the air is misty, the sun red, and yet the weather calm, and the tops of the mountains illuminated; that in caverns and reservoirs of water, a hollow sound is heard under the earth, like that arising from pent up winds; that at night the stars are surrounded with a sort of bur, which makes them appear much larger; that the sky, towards the north-west, has a black and menacing look; that the sea emits a strong fetid smell, and is violently agitated without any wind; that the wind itself, forsaking its usual steady easterly course, shifts about to the west, whence it blows very violently, at different intervals for about two hours at a time†.

Though the truth of all these observations cannot be ascertained, yet to pay no attention to the remarks of rude nations on times and seasons, would be a strong indication of literary pride, or of a mind little addicted to philosophical inquiries. Barbarians, by reason of their want of employment, and their habit of living in the open air, have both an opportunity, and are under the necessity of observing the smallest alterations in that element. Hence shepherds and husbandmen, in every country, have acquired many useful informations in regard to the weather, which have escaped those engaged in sedentary employments, though otherwise more enlightened. Perhaps we ought to depend upon rustics or savages for the discovery of effects, and on the learned only for the investigation

* Raynal, liv. x.

† Hist. Nat. des Antilles.

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of causes. Let us trace, if possible, the cause of those hurricanes, so frequent and fatal in the West India islands.

No hurricane comes from the east; that is, from the greatest extent of the sea at those islands. As this is an undisputed fact, it naturally inclines us to suppose, that they are formed on the continent of America. The west wind, which blows constantly, and very violently in the southern parts, from July to January, and the north wind blowing at the same time in the northern parts, must, when they meet, oppose each other with a force proportioned to their natural velocity. If this shock happens in the long and narrow passes of the mountains, it must occasion a strong current of air, which will extend itself in a compound ratio of the moving power, and the diameter of the narrow pass. Every solid body that meets this current of air will be impressed with a degree of force proportioned to the extent of the surface it opposes to the current; so that if the position of that surface should be perpendicular to the direction of the hurricane, it is impossible to determine what effect might be produced upon the whole mass. Fortunately the different bearings of the coasts of the West India islands, and their angular, or spherical figure, occasion these frightful hurricanes to fall upon surfaces more or less oblique, which divert the current of air, break its force, and gradually destroy its effects. Experience also proves, that their action is by degrees so much weakened, that, even in the direction where the hurricane falls with most force, it is scarcely felt at ten leagues distance. The most accurate observers have remarked, that all the hurricanes which have successively subverted the islands, came from the north west, and consequently from the narrow passes formed by the mountains of Santa Martha*. The distance of some islands from that direction, is not a sufficient reason for rejecting this opinion, as several other causes may conspire to divert a current of air to the south or east.

Such are the destructive phenomena which nature has opposed to the acquisition of the rich productions of the West Indies: but what barrier can restrain the avidity of man, or what terrors appal him in the pursuit of Hesperian luxuries?—Columbus, as we have seen †, after forming a settlement in Hispaniola, one of the Great Antilles, and discovering the rest, fell in with the Caribbees. He did not there meet with the same timid and harmless race of men, whom he had found in the larger islands. The Caribs opposed the Spaniards with the most unshaken resolution, without regard to numbers, and defended their country with an intrepidity, which they have discovered in all succeeding rencounters with the Europeans. According to their own tradition they originally came from Guiana, and the ferocity of their manners, as well as the vicinity of that country, render this origin highly probable. They are commonly above the middle size, muscular, and well made. Their hair and their eyes are black, and their features agreeable. In a word, their whole figure would be pleasing, did they not spoil their natural beauty by artificial and fancied ornaments. They wear no cloaths, but in order to fortify themselves against the

* Raynal, liv. x.

† Book I. chap. i. p. 24.

intense heat of the sun-beams, as well as to guard against the bite of insects, they paint their bodies all over with the juice of the Palma Christi, which gives them the appearance of a boiled lobster *.

The Caribs, like the Brazilians, have some respect for the sun and moon, but neither temples nor worship. If they have any idea of a Supreme Being, they believe that he enjoys his happiness in tranquility, and is so little attentive to the actions of men, as never to inflict vengeance on offenders. They recognize, however, two sorts of spirits; the one beneficent, whose habitation is in heaven, and from whom every man receives that spirit by which he is guided; the other malignant, who roam the air during the night, who have no fixed abode, and whose sole employment is to do harm. Their opinion concerning the origin of these evil spirits illustrates their idea of the nature of the soul. Every man, say they, has as many souls as his arteries have pulsés; the principal of which is in the heart, whence it is conducted to heaven, after death, by the good genius who served to guide him in this life. The other souls, who were not in the heart, disperse themselves in air; one troop over the sea, where they occasion shipwrecks, and another over the land, where they do all the mischief in their power †. Such is the rude theology of the Caribs; whence we may perceive, that, instead of regarding the heart as the fountain of corruption, as the most treacherous of all things, and desperately wicked, they considered it as the source of all that is benevolent in man.

The ideas of government among the Caribs are as imperfect as those of religion. The name of Cazique, which the Spaniards first took from the inhabitants of Hispaniola, and which they have introduced into all their colonies, is nothing but a vain title among the Caribs, without either power or prerogative. In every island however, we are told, there was always one who bore that name, but seldom more than two; that to obtain the title of cazique, it is necessary to have been distinguished in war; to be superior to every competitor in running and swimming; to be able to carry a greater burden; but more especially to be endowed with superior patience, and the ability of suffering the most exquisite pains. Thus qualified, the cazique is chosen captain general on the approach of a war: he orders the preparations, assembles the councils, and enjoys in all respects the first rank; but during peace, he is not distinguished from the other captains, except by his title, and that degree of respect which naturally follows the supposition of extraordinary merit ‡.

The marriages, the funerals, the dances, and the feasts of the Caribs, are nearly the same with those of the other Americans. But for the honour of their nation, they differ in one particular from all the Indian tribes: if they eat their enemies, it is in the height of triumph, and on the field of victory; and they not only treat with humanity such strangers as visit their coasts, but even such

* Voyages de P. Labat, tom. II. p. 77, & suiv.

† Du Tertre, Hist. des Antilles, tom. II.

‡ Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XV. liv. vii. chap. 2.

captives as they take without resistance, shewing compassion more especially to women and children *. They are however, like all the Americans, little susceptible of the passion of love, and never shew the least marks of attention or tenderness for that sex so much courted in other quarters of the globe. They consider their wives rather in the light of slaves than of companions: they do not even suffer them to eat with them, and have usurped the right of divorcing them without permitting them the liberty of marrying again †. The women, even in this depressed state, enjoy a gaiety unknown to the men, who are generally of a melancholy disposition, and often sit whole days moping in their cottages without uttering a word ‡.

Notwithstanding the advantage of fire-arms, the Spaniards found the Caribs very formidable enemies. At first they fought only for gold in their islands, and afterwards for slaves; but not meeting with any mines, and the Caribs being so proud and sullen that they died when subjected to servitude, the Spaniards gave up all thoughts of making conquests, which they thought of little consequence, and which they could neither acquire nor preserve without constant and bloody wars. The French and English being apprised of this, ventured to equip a small fleet, in order to intercept the Spanish vessels which frequented those latitudes. The booty gained increased the number of adventurers. Peace, which frequently took place in Europe, did not prevent such expeditions; and the custom that prevailed among the Spaniards of stopping all ships that sailed beyond the tropics justified such violences.

The two nations had long been acquainted with the Leeward islands, without ever thinking of making any settlement. Perhaps they were afraid of irritating the Caribs, by whom they had been favourably received; or perhaps they imagined, that a soil which yielded none of those productions which were in request in the Old World, was unworthy of their attention. But at length, in 1623, Mr. Thomas Warner, who had made a voyage to Surinam, then in possession of the English, obtained a grant of the island of St. Christopher from James I. and entering into an association with fourteen other gentlemen, sailed thither for the purpose of making a settlement. The French, under Monsieur Desnambuc, landed on the island nearly about the same time, and according to their own writers, on the same day. Be that, however, as it may, it is certain that Warner and Desnambuc, understanding that the views of each were the same, instead of entering into any nice disputes about pre-occupancy, agreed to divide the island between them, and to assist each other against the Spaniards, whom they considered as their common enemy §.

This harmony between the settlers of the two nations introduced a most atrocious act of mutual cruelty. Warner and Desnambuc, intending to return

* Du Tertre, tom. II.

† This is a further proof of their being a colony from Guiana.

‡ Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom XV. liv. vii. c. 2.

§ Du Tertre, ubi sup. Duglafs's Summary.

to Europe, and suspecting the practices of the Spaniards with the natives, whom by this time they had forced into submission, resolved to get rid of them. For this purpose, they forged a pretence, that the Caribs, at the instigation of their magicians, had formed a conspiracy against the French and English; and attacking those guiltless savages by night, either massacred them or drove them from the island. The two chiefs now departed for their respective courts, where their inhumanity obtained the name of heroism. Warner was knighted, and made governor of the English part of the island, as Desnambuc was of the French. The latter talked so plausibly to Cardinal Richelieu, that a French West India company was erected in 1626; and it is likely that Warner used a similar language, as an English West India company was established the same year*.

Meanwhile the expulsion of the Caribs from St. Christopher's, had alarmed those of the neighbouring islands, who made a descent to the number of three or four thousand. The English and French were no strangers to their intention, and made a proper disposition to receive them. Part were suffered to land; but a body of musketeers, planted in ambush, poured upon them so brisk a fire that they were obliged to retire to their canoes, though not before they had killed two hundred of the Europeans. Nor was this the only danger to which the new colony was exposed. The court of Madrid, jealous of the neighbourhood of two such active and enterprising nations, ordered Frederic de Toledo, who was sent with a powerful fleet to expel the Dutch from Brazil, to destroy, in his passage, to use the pompous language of Spain, those pirates who had invaded her territories. The French and English were sensible of their inability to resist such a force; those who escaped the sword of the Spaniards, therefore took refuge in the adjacent islands. When the danger was over, the greater part of them returned to their former settlements; and Spain, whose attention was engrossed by objects which she considered as of more importance, gave them no further disturbance.

The English and French had at first considered the Caribs as their common enemy, but this kind of casual association was frequently after interrupted. It implied no lasting engagement, much less a compact for their mutual possession; and the savages artfully contrived to be at peace, sometimes with one nation, sometimes with the other, and by that means gained the advantage of having only one enemy at a time. This policy, however, would have availed those islands but little, had France and England paid sufficient attention to their infant colonies, of whose importance they were not yet sensible. The indifference shewn by the two mother countries, determined their subjects in the New World, in January 1660, to enter into an alliance, securing to each people those possessions which the various events of war had procured them, and which till then had been totally unsettled. In consequence of this treaty, which established tranquillity in the West Indies, France obtained Guadalupe, Martinico, Granada, and

* Id. *ibid.*

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some less considerable acquisitions; and England was confirmed in the possession of Barbadoes, Nevis, Antigua, Montserrat, and several smaller islands. St. Christopher's continued to belong to both nations. The Caribs were confined to Dominica and St. Vincent's; where all the scattered tribes of this people were collected, and did not at that time exceed ten thousand men *.

Before this period the English settlements had acquired some kind of form, and were in a flourishing condition. On the contrary, the French settlements were abandoned by a great number of their inhabitants, reduced to despair from the necessity they were under of submitting to the tyranny of an exclusive company. Passionately attached to liberty, these adventurers fled to the northern coast of Hispaniola; a place where several of their countrymen had taken refuge, when driven out of St. Christopher's by the Spaniards, about thirty years before. They were there called *Buccaneers*; because, in imitation of the custom of the natives, they dried with smoke part of the flesh of such cattle as they killed, in places denominated *buccans* in the Indian language †.

This name leads us to a very curious inquiry: the rise and progress of a set of men who, from obscure beginnings, rendered themselves famous by their courage and their crimes, and to whom the English and French are in some measure indebted for their prosperity in the West Indies.

After the failure of the mines in Hispaniola, and the conquest of the rich empires of Mexico and Peru, that valuable island was entirely neglected by the Spaniards. The greater part of its once flourishing cities were deserted by their inhabitants, and the few that remained were sunk in the most enervating indolence. The *Buccaneers* therefore met with no interruption in that course of life to which they devoted themselves; namely, the pursuit of wild cattle, with which the country abounded. Part of the meat they ate fresh, part they cured in the manner described, and the hides they sold to such vessels as came upon the coast, but chiefly at first to the Dutch, who furnished them with brandy, cloaths, fire-arms, powder and shot. As they had neither wives nor children, they generally lived two and two together, in order to administer to each other those mutual services which are necessary to a comfortable existence. In these little societies property was common, and the survivor inherited all that remained on the death of his companion. Even between one society and another the most perfect confidence and good will prevailed: nothing was kept under lock or key, yet theft was unknown. It was indeed unnecessary; for what any one stood in need of he freely received from his neighbours, without any other solicitation than acquainting them with his wants. A refusal would have been marked with infamy. Without government, laws, or religion, the *Buccaneers* lived under certain conventions accommodated to their condition; nor do they seem to have had reason to lament the want of a more perfect polity. Differences seldom arose among them; and when they did, they were easily adjusted. Men born in

* Du Tertre.

† Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XV. liv. vii. c. 1. p. 376.

society attempted to restore the state of nature. They quitted even their family names, and assumed others borrowed from the terms of war and ferocity*.

The dress of the Buccaneers consisted of a shirt dipt in the blood of the animals they had killed; a pair of trowsers dirtier than the shirt; a leathern girdle, from which hung a short sabre, and some Dutch knives; a hat without any rim, except a flap before, in order to pull it off; shoes made of raw hides, and no stockings. With these their ambition was satisfied, provided they could have a musket, four feet and an half long, which carried a bullet near a pound weight, and a pack of between twenty and thirty dogs. Thus accoutred and attended, they commonly set out by break of day, in search of wild cattle, which were no sooner killed than they were flayed, and the pursuit was never discontinued, till as many bullocks were killed as there were huntsmen in company. The labour of every day was the same, and was constantly renewed, till they had provided themselves with such a number of hides as was sufficient to supply the merchants with whom they had a contract. They were then carried to the vessels, stationed in some private bay, by persons who were called *engagés*, or bondsmen; a set of unfortunate people who were seduced in Europe, as many are still, to sell or indent themselves to the colonies during the term of three years. One of these miserable men presuming to represent to his master, who always fixed upon a Sunday for this journey, that God had forbidden such a practice, when he declared, "Six days shalt thou labour, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest:"—"And I," replied the brutal Buccaneer, "say to thee, "Six days shalt thou kill bullocks, and strip them of their skins, and on the seventh day thou shalt carry their hides to the sea-shore†."

Men of such a savage cast, habituated to constant exercise, and feeding every day on fresh meat, were little subject to diseases. If their excursions were occasionally suspended, it was only by a slight fever, which was not felt the day following. Their vigour, however, must have been exhausted in time, under a climate too intemperate for so laborious a course of life. But the climate was not the only enemy the Buccaneers had to encounter. These ruffians had not always confined themselves to the pursuit of cattle: they had occasionally made inroads upon the Spanish settlements, and supplied themselves with what conveniencies they stood in need of. Exasperated at length, by having their tranquillity and ease continually disturbed, the inhabitants invited, from the continent and the neighbouring islands, some parties of soldiers, who fell upon the dispersed Buccaneers, and put many of them to the sword. They must all have been cut off, had they not formed themselves into a body for their mutual defence. Under the necessity of separating through the day, in order to prosecute their common employment, they always assembled at night. If any one did not appear at the appointed hour, it was concluded that he was either killed.

* Ibid. p. 384.

† Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XV. liv. vii. c. 1. P. Labat, *Nouv. Voyages aux Iles de l'Amerique*, tom. VII. P. Charlevoix, *Hist. de St. Domingue*, tom. III.

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or taken prisoner; and the chase was suspended, till he was either found, or his death revenged*.

It is easy to conceive how much blood must have been shed by a set of banditti, belonging to no country, and subject to no laws; hunters and warriors from the calls of nature and instinct, and excited to murder and violences from the necessity of defending themselves, and of annoying their enemies. In the height of their fury, they devoted every thing to destruction, without distinction of age or sex. At length despairing of being able to subdue such obstinate and ferocious invaders, the Spaniards took the resolution of destroying all the cattle in Hispaniola, by a general chase. The execution of this design having deprived the Buccaneers of their usual resources, they were obliged to betake themselves to a new course of life. The sober part of them became planters, and those of a more restless disposition associated themselves with a set of pirates, who under the name of Freebooters, had taken possession of the little island of Tortuga, whence they carried on their depredations, and were now rendered so formidable as to become the tyrants of the ocean†.

France, which had hitherto disclaimed the Buccaneers for her subjects, acknowledged them as soon as they became planters; and when their settlements began to acquire some stability, she treated them with still more attention. In 1665, she sent them over a governor. The name of this magistrate was D'Ogeron, a man of experience, abilities, and integrity, who may properly be denominated the father of the French colony in Hispaniola. He brought along with him several women, who like most of those that had been sent into the West Indies, were not persons of the most exact virtue. The Buccaneers were not offended at the licentiousness of their manners. "I do not desire you to give me an account of your past conduct," was the language of each of them to the woman whom chance had allotted him:—"you did not then belong to me. Give me your word for the future, as you are now mine, I acquit you of what is past;"—then striking his hand on the barrel of his gun, he added, "This will revenge me of your breach of faith: if you are *false*, this will prove *true* to my aim‡."

England had not waited till her rival obtained a firm settlement in the Great Antilles, to procure herself an establishment there. The declining state of the kingdom of Spain, weakened by its internal divisions; by the revolt of Catalonia and Portugal; by the commotions at Naples; by the destruction of its formidable infantry in the plains of Rocroy; by its continual losses in the Netherlands; by the incapacity of its ministers; and even by the extinction of that national pride, which after having been raised and maintained by being fixed upon great objects, had degenerated into an indolent haughtiness— all these circumstances portending the ruin of the Spanish monarchy, left no room to doubt

* Id. *ibid.*

† Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XV. liv. vii. c. 1.

‡ Id. *ibid.* Hist. de St. Domingue, tom. III.

that it would be assailed by enemies in every quarter. France artfully took advantage of those confusions which she had partly occasioned; and Cromwell joined her in 1655, in order to share in the spoils of a kingdom that had long been the terror of Europe.

Had Cromwell understood and regarded the interests of his country, he would have supported the declining ambition of France, and preserved that balance of power on which the greatness and security of England so much depended. Had he studied only his own interest he would have maintained an exact neutrality between those two great monarchies; nor would he have hazarded his ill acquired and unsettled dominion, by provoking foreign enemies who might lend assistance to domestic faction, and overturn his tottering throne: but his magnanimity undervalued danger; his active disposition and avidity of extensive glory made him incapable of repose; and as the policy of men is continually warped by their temper, he only deliberated, after concluding a peace with Holland, against what enemy he should turn his victorious arms. The extensive dominions, and yet extreme weakness of Spain in the West Indies; the vigorous courage, and great naval power of England, were circumstances, which, when compared, excited the ambition of the enterprising Protector, and made him hope, that he might by some signal conquest, render for ever illustrious that sway which he had assumed over his country. Should he even fail of any durable acquisition, the American treasures, which must every year cross the Atlantic to reach Spain, were a sure prey he thought to the English navy, and would support his military force, and save him from the necessity of laying any new burden on the discontented people. From France a vigorous resistance must be expected. No plunder, no conquest could be hoped for: the progress of his arms, even if attended with success, must there be slow and gradual; and the advantages acquired, however real, would be less striking to the ignorant multitude, whom it was his interest to allure. These motives of policy were probably seconded by those of religion. The Hugonots, he expected, would be better treated, while he engaged in a close union with their sovereign; and as the Spaniards were more zealous catholics than the French, consequently more exposed to the old puritanical hatred, and had even erected the bloody tribunal of the inquisition, whose rigours they had refused to mitigate on Cromwell's solicitation, he hoped that a holy meritorious war with such idolaters would not fail of protection from Heaven*. A preacher likewise, inspired as was supposed by a prophetic spirit, bid him "Go and prosper;"—calling him a stone cut out of the mountains without hands, that would break the pride of the Spaniard, crush Antichrist, and make way for the purity of the gospel over the whole earth†.

Equally actuated by those bigotted, those ambitious, and those interested motives, Cromwell equipped two powerful squadrons; while the neighbouring states, ignorant of his intentions, remained in suspense, and looked with anxious expectation on what side the storm would discharge itself. One of the squa-

* Thurot, vol. II. Carrington, p. 191.

† Bates.

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drons, consisting of thirty capital ships, was sent into the Mediterranean under admiral Blake, whose fame was already spread over Europe, and who filled all that part of the world with the renown of English valour *; the other, consisting of an equal number of ships, though of inferior force, was dispatched to the West Indies under admiral Pen, and carried on board four thousand soldiers, under the command of general Venables. About five thousand more joined them from Barbadoes and St. Christopher's. Various causes, however, conspired to render this formidable armament less successful than might have been expected. The soldiers were the refuse of the whole army; the forces enlisted in the West Indies were the most profligate of mankind; Pen and Venables were of incompatible tempers; the troops were not furnished with arms fit for such an expedition; their provisions were defective both in quantity and quality; all hopes of pillage, the best incentive to valour among such men, were refused the soldiers and seamen; nor were any directions or intelligence given to conduct the officers in their enterprise; and as they were supposed to be attached to the royal party, they were tied down to follow the advice of a number of commissioners, whom the jealousy of Cromwell had placed over them, and who disconcerted them in all their projects †.

It was agreed by the admiral and general to attack St. Domingo, the capital of Hispaniola, and the only place of strength in the island. On the approach of the English fleet, the Spaniards, in consternation, deserted their houses, and fled into the woods. But the blunders of their enemies allowed them leisure to recollect themselves. Contrary to the opinion of Venables, the soldiers were landed at forty miles distance from the town, when they might have been safely disembarked in the very port itself. Destitute of guides, they wandered four days through the woods without provisions; and what was still more intolerable in that sultry climate, without water. The Spaniards recovered spirit, and attacked them; when, discouraged by the bad conduct of their officers, and scarcely alive from hunger, thirst, and fatigue, they were unable to resist. An inconsiderable number of the enemy put the whole army to flight, killed six hundred of them, and chased the rest on board their ships.

In order to atone, as much as possible, for this unprosperous attempt, the English commanders bent their course to Jamaica, which then belonged to Spain.

* Casting anchor before Leghorn, he demanded and obtained from the duke of Tuscany reparation for some losses, which the English commerce had formerly sustained from him. He next sailed to Algiers, and compelled the Dey to make peace, and to restrain his piratical subjects from farther violences on the English. He presented himself before Tunis; and having there made the same demands, the Dey of that republic bid him look to the castles of Porro-Farino and Go-Jetta, and do his utmost. Blake needed not to be roused by such a bravado: he drew his ships close up to the castles, and tore them in pieces with his artillery, while he sent a detachment of sailors in their long-boats into the harbour, and burnt every ship that lay there. The Spaniards also felt his fury, both on their own coasts and at the Canaries, where he destroyed a fleet of sixteen sail, richly laden with the treasures of the New World, in the bay of Santa Cruz, under the cannon of seven forts, all united by a line of communication. Lives of the Admirals, vol. II.

† Burchet's Naval History. Thurlow, vol. III.

On landing, proclamation was made that every man should shoot his neighbour dead, if he observed him to turn his back. As they were advancing towards St. Jago, the capital, which was in no condition to resist such a force, the governor offered to capitulate, and deliver up the city; but the discussion of these articles, artfully prolonged, gave the Spaniards time to remove their most valuable effects, and to fly themselves to the mountains; so that when the English came to take possession of St. Jago, they found nothing there but bare walls. As a consolation for this disappointment, they found themselves not only in possession of the capital, but in fact of the island itself; for though the Spaniards, in parties, sometimes attempted to surprise them, they never appeared in a body, and at last found it necessary to transport themselves and their effects to Cuba. There they were received with such marks of disgrace as the weakness of their defence deserved, and sent back with a force that was supposed to be sufficient to expel the invaders: but the English now behaved in such a manner, as not only to wipe off the stain which their valour had suffered in Hispaniola, but to establish themselves in the quiet possession of Jamaica; the Spaniards being driven from place to place, and at length obliged to embark on board their ships, and return with new shame to Cuba*.

It was long before the establishment of the French in Hispaniola, or the conquest of Jamaica by the English, that the Freebooters made themselves masters of Tortuga. The adventurers of both nations, who had taken refuge on the northern coast of Hispaniola, on being expelled from St. Christopher's in 1630, judged it prudent to secure a retreat. For this purpose they pitched upon Tortuga, (a small island within two leagues of the great one) and the few Spaniards who were left to guard it, retired on the first summons. They now found themselves absolute lords of an island eight leagues long, and two broad, with mountains covered with valuable woods, and plains that only wanted the hand of a cultivator. The northern coast appeared to be inaccessible: the southern had an excellent harbour commanded by a rock, which required only a battery of cannon to secure the entrance of the island. This precaution was not neglected. So happy a situation soon brought to Tortuga a multitude of desperados of all nations. The most moderate applied themselves to the cultivation of the ground; the more active went to hunt wild cattle in Hispaniola, in the manner and for the purposes already described; while the most intrepid became corsairs†, and performed such exploits as will ever be remembered with an equal mixture of admiration and horror.

A. D. 1632.

This is the true origin of those pirates, formerly distinguished in England by the appellation of Freebooters, and in France by that of *Flibustiers*‡. But as

* When Pen and Venables returned to England, they were both sent to the Tower by the Protector. He had made a conquest of greater consequence than he was then aware of, but much inferior to the vast prospects which he had formed. Thurloe, vol. III.

† *Hist. Gen. des Voyages*, tom. XV. liv. vii. c. 1. Charlevoix, *Hist. de St. Dominique*.

‡ *Flibustier* is by some derived from *Flyboat*, in allusion to the light vessels in which those pirates made their first excursions: others deduce it, with no less appearance of reason, from the English word *Freebooter*, which indicates one who makes war for the purpose of pillage. *Hist. Gen. des Voyages*, tom. XV. p. 376.

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they are now generally known in this country by the name of *Buccaneers*, which probably began to be applied to them soon after their junction with the hunters of wild cattle, properly so denominated, we shall continue that name, as more expressive than any other of their ferocious character, whether men or animals were the object of pursuit.

Nothing could appear less formidable than the first armaments of the piratical *Buccaneers*. Having formed themselves, like the hunters of wild cattle, into small societies, who took the name of the *Brothers of the Coast*, they made their excursions in an open boat, which commonly contained between twenty and thirty men, exposed night and day to all the inclemencies of the weather. These inconveniencies arising from their situation were augmented by their licentious disposition. A love of freedom, which, duly regulated, cannot be sufficiently cherished, rendered them averse from all those restraints which civilized men voluntarily impose on each other for their common convenience: some of them chose to sing, while others were desirous of going to sleep; and as the authority which they had conferred on their captain was confined to giving orders in battle, they lived in the greatest confusion. Like savages, having no apprehension of want, nor taking any care to guard against famine by a prudent oeconomy, they were frequently exposed to all the extremities of hunger and thirst. But deriving, even from their distresses, a courage superior to every danger, the sight of a ship transported them to a degree of frenzy. They never deliberated on the method of attack, but their custom was to board the vessel as soon as possible. The smallness of their own vessels, and their dexterity in managing them, preserved them from the fire of the enemy, one broadside from whom must have sent them to the bottom. They presented only the prow of their boats or slender barges, filled with musketeers, who fired at the enemy's port-holes with so much exactness as confounded the most experienced gunners; and when they had fixed their grappling, the largest ships seldom escaped them*.

Though the *Buccaneers*, in cases of extremity, attacked the ships of every nation, those belonging to the subjects of the crown of Spain were the principal object of their piracies. They thought that the cruelties which the Spaniards had exercised on the natives of the New World, were a sufficient apology for every violence that could be committed against them; and indeed the ravages of these plunderers, considered with an eye to the scheme of Providence, may be regarded as the chastisements of an Almighty arm. Their hatred of that nation was farther roused by motives of private resentment; by the indignation they felt, as independent men, on seeing themselves debarred the privilege of hunting and fishing, which they justly considered as natural rights. Accommodating their conscience to these principles of religion and equity, they never embarked in any expedition without publicly praying to Heaven for its success; nor did they ever return loaded with booty, without solemnly returning thanks to God for their good fortune†.

* Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XV. liv. vii. c. 1. Hist. *Buccaneers*, part I. chap. vi.


† Id. *ibid.*

This booty was originally carried to the island of Tortuga, their common rendezvous, in order to be divided; but afterwards the French went to some of the Ports of Hispaniola, and the English to those of Jamaica, where they could dispose of it to more advantage, either in business or pleasure. Before the distribution, each person held up his hand, and protested, that he had secreted nothing of what he had taken; and if any one was convicted of perjury, a case that seldom occurred, he was degraded, and left, as soon as an opportunity offered, on some desert island, as a traitor unworthy to live in society. Such among them as had been maimed in the expedition were first provided for, according to an agreement before setting out. The recompense was proportioned to the injury. If any one had lost, for example, a right-arm, he received six hundred dollars, or six slaves; if a left-arm five hundred dollars, or five slaves, and the same for a right leg *. The wounded were allowed a dollar a day for two months, in order to enable them to have their wounds dressed. If they had not money enough to answer these several demands, the whole company was obliged to engage in some fresh expedition, and to continue till they had acquired a sufficient stock, to enable them to satisfy such honourable contracts.

After this act of justice and humanity, the remainder of the booty was divided into as many shares as there were adventurers on board. The captain could only claim a single share along with the rest; but they generally complimented him with three, four, five, or even six, according as he had acquitted himself. When the vessel was not the property of the company, the person who fitted it out, and furnished it with necessary arms and provisions, was entitled to a third of all prizes. Among themselves, favour had no influence in the distribution of the booty, every share being determined by lot. Instances of such rigid justice are rarely to be met with among any body of men. The attention of the Buccaneers to this principle, extended even to the dead. Their share was given to the man who was known to be their companion when alive, and therefore their heir, as supposed, according to inclination. If the person who had been killed had no intimate, his part was sent to his relations, when they were known; and if they knew of no friends or relations, it was distributed in charity to the poor, and in benefactions to the churches, that they might pray for the eternal welfare of the deceased.

When these duties had been complied with, the Buccaneers indulged themselves in all kinds of profusion. Unbounded licentiousness in gaming, wine, women—every kind of debauchery was carried to the greatest excess, and was limited only by that want which such profusion occasioned. Hence, however, rich on their return, they were in a short time perfectly needy, and destitute of either cloaths or provisions. They again went to sea; and the new supplies which they acquired were lavished in the same inconsiderate manner. If they were asked, what satisfaction they could find in dissipating so rapidly, what they had gained with so much jeopardy, they made this very ingenuous reply. “Exposed as we are,” said they; “to such a variety of dangers, our life is totally dif-

* Hist. Buccaneers, part I. c. vi.

BOOK III.  ferent from that of other men. Why should we, who are alive to-day, and run the hazard of being dead to-morrow, think of hoarding?—We reckon only the day we have lived, but never think of that which is to come. Our concern is rather to squander life away, than to preserve it*.”

The ships that sailed from Europe to America seldom tempted the avidity of the first Buccaneers, as the merchandise which they contained could not easily have been sold in those early times; but they always watched them on their return, when certain they were laden with gold, silver, precious stones, and other rich productions of the New World. They commonly followed the galleons and flota as far as the channel of Bahama; and as soon as by any accident a ship was separated from the rest, they instantly attacked her, and she seldom escaped them. They even ventured to attack with success several ships at a time. The Spaniards, who called them *dæmons*, trembled at their approach, and generally surrendered, if they came to close quarters †.

A remarkable instance of this timidity on the one side, and temerity on the other, occurs in the history of Peter Legrand, a native of Dieppe in Normandy, who being cruising in those latitudes with a small vessel, which had no more than twenty-eight men and four guns, ventured to attack the vice-admiral of the galleons. Being resolved to conquer or die, and having exacted an oath from his crew to the same purpose, he ordered the carpenter to bore a hole in the side of his own vessel, that all hope of escape might be cut off. This was done accordingly; when, with a pistol in one hand, and a sword in the other, he climbed up the sides of the Spanish ship, and bearing down all opposition, entered the great cabin attended by some of the most desperate of his associates. There he found the admiral and some of his officers playing at cards; presented a pistol to his breast, and ordered him to surrender. Meantime the rest of the Buccaneers took possession of the gun-room, and seized the arms, while the Spaniards, struck with terror and amazement, demanded quarter ‡.

Like examples are numerous. Michael de Basco had the boldness to attack, under the very cannon of Porto Bello, a galleon valued at a million of pesos, which he took with very little loss. Nor must the attempt of Captain Lawrence be forgot. Being unexpectedly overtaken by two Spanish ships, carrying each sixty pieces of cannon, and seven hundred men, “You have,” said he, addressing himself to his companions, “two much experience not to be sensible of your danger, and too much courage to fear it. On this occasion we must avail ourselves of every circumstance; hazard every thing; attack and defend at the same time:—valour, artifice, rashness, and even despair must now be employed!—Let us dread the ignominy of a defeat; let us dread the cruelty of our enemies; and let us fight, that we may escape them.” After this speech, which was received with general applause, the captain called to one of the bravest of his crew, and in the presence of the rest ordered him to set fire to the gun-

* *Id. ibid.* Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XV. liv. vii. c. 1. Such has ever been the language of men familiar with danger, and exposed to peril. The desire of enjoying life seems to increase in proportion to the hazard of losing it.

† *Id. ibid.*

‡ Hist. Buccaneers, part I. c. vi.

powder, on the first signal for that purpose; giving them by this to understand, that they must either die or conquer. He then ranged his men on both sides of his vessel, and raising his voice, in order to be more distinctly heard, "We must," said he, "pass between their ships, and fire upon them from every side." This plan of operation was executed with equal courage and dispatch. The galleons, however, were not taken; but the Spaniards were so much reduced in number, that they either were not able, or had not courage to continue the combat against an handful of resolute men, who even in their retreat, carried away the honour of the victory*.

Reduced almost to despair by finding themselves a continual prey to these ravagers, the Spaniards diminished the number of their ships, and the colonies gave up their connexions with each other. They relinquished all the power, conveniences, and fortune which their mutual intercourse procured them, and formed themselves in a manner into so many distinct and independent states. They were sensible of the disadvantages resulting from such a conduct, and avowed them; but the dread of falling into the hands of rapacious and savage men, had greater influence over them than the dictates of honour, interest, and ambition. Hence that languid inactivity by which they are still distinguished. These humiliating precautions, however, served but to increase the ardour of the Buccaneers. They had only appeared hitherto in the Spanish settlements, in order to carry off such provisions as they were in want of; but they no sooner found their captures diminish, than they determined to procure by land what the sea denied them. The richest and most populous countries in the New World were plundered and laid waste: the culture of the fields was no less neglected than the exercise of navigation; and the Spaniards were as much afraid to appear beyond the walls of their cities, as their ships without the mouth of their harbours†.

Among the Buccaneers who first signalized themselves in this new species of piracy, was Montbars, a gentleman of Languedoc. Having by chance, in his infancy, met with a circumstantial, and perhaps exaggerated account, of the cruelties practised by the Spaniards in the conquest of the New World, he conceived an antipathy against the nation that had committed so many enormities, which rose even to a degree of frenzy. The strength of this aversion is exemplified by an anecdote. Being engaged when at college, in playing in a dramatic piece, the part of a Frenchman, who had quarrelled with a Spaniard, he threw himself with enthusiastic fury upon his antagonist, and would have killed him unless prevented. A passion capable of such excess could not easily have been moderated. Montbars strove only to rouse it. His heated imagination, which he loved to indulge, continually represented to him innumerable multitudes of innocent people, murdered by a set of savage monsters nursed in the mountains of Castile: the unhappy victims, whose names were ever present to his memory, seemed to call upon him for vengeance: he longed to imbrue his hands in Spanish blood!—and no sooner

* Hist. Gen. des Voyages, ubi sup. Hist. Buccaneers.

† Hist. Buccaneers, part I. c. vii.

was war declared between France and Spain, towards the middle of the seventeenth century, than he embarked on board a ship, in order to pursue the Spaniards on the same coasts where the first conquerors had perpetrated their barbarities*. In the passage they met with a Spanish vessel; attacked it; and, as was usual in those times, immediately boarded it. Montbars with a sabre in his hand, fell furiously upon the enemy; broke through them; and hurrying twice from one end of the ship to the other, levelled every thing that opposed his violence. When he had compelled the enemy to surrender, he left to his companions the happiness of dividing the rich booty, satisfied himself with the cruel pleasure of contemplating the dead bodies of the Spaniards, against whom he had vowed eternal hatred, lying in heaps besmeared with blood. Humanity in him became the source of the most unfeeling barbarity.

Fresh opportunities soon occurred, which enabled Montbars to gratify still farther his favourite passion. The ship in which he sailed arrived on the coast of Hispaniola, where the Buccaneers on land immediately proposed to barter some provisions for brandy. As the articles which they offered were of small value, they apologized for this inferiority by saying, that the Spaniards had laid waste their settlements, and despoiled them of every thing worth carrying off. "And do you," replied Montbars, "tamely suffer such insults?"—"No!" answered they in the same tone:—"the Spaniards have experienced what sort of men we are, and have therefore taken advantage of the time when we were engaged in hunting to pillage our dwellings. But we are going to join some of our companions, who have been no better treated, and then there will be warm work."—"If you think proper," said Montbars, "I will head you: not as your commander, but as the foremost to expose myself to danger. Perceiving from his appearance that he was such a man as they wanted, they cheerfully accepted his offer. The same day they overtook the enemy, and Montbars attacked them with an impetuosity that astonished the bravest and most experienced Buccaneer. Scarce one Spaniard escaped the effects of his fury. The remaining part of his life corresponded with these first exploits; and the Spaniards suffered so much from him, both by sea and land, that he acquired the name of the Extremator†.

In consequence of this new method of carrying on war, which required superior forces, the associations of the Buccaneers became more numerous. The first powerful association was formed by FrancisOLONOIS, who derived his name from that territory in France which is called the Sands of Olone, the place of his birth. From the abject condition of an *engagé* or bondsman, he had gradually raised himself to the command of two canoes, and twenty men. With these he was so successful as to take a Spanish frigate on the coast of Cuba. After the engagement, he ordered such of the enemy as were wounded to be put to death. This being observed by a negro, who fearing that he might share the same fate, attempted to save himself by a perfidious declaration, but very consistent with the part which he had been destined to act. He affirmed, that he had been put on board

* Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. XV. liv. vii. c. 1.

† Id. *ibid.*

by the governor of the Havana, in order to serve as executioner to the Buccaneers, whom he had sentenced to be hanged, not doubting but they would be all taken prisoners. The savage Lolonois, fired with rage at this information, commanded all the Spaniards to be brought before him, and cut off their heads one after another, sucking at each stroke the drops of blood that trickled down his sabre! — He next repaired to Puerto del Principe, in which were four ships, fitted out on purpose to sail in pursuit of him. These he took, and threw every person on board into the sea, except one man, whom he sent with a letter to the governor of the Havana, acquainting him with what he had done, and declaring that he should never henceforth give quarter to any Spaniard; not even to the governor himself, should he fall into his hands, as he hoped would yet be the case. “Thus,” added he, “have I retaliated the kindness, which you intended me and my companions *.”

After this enterprise, Lolonois ran his canoes and prize-ships aground, and sailed with his frigate only, to the island of Tortuga. There he met with Michael de Basco, who had so much distinguished himself, as already mentioned, by taking a Spanish ship of great value under the cannon of Porto Bello, and other actions equally brave and daring. These two adventurers gave notice to the whole body of pirates, that they proposed to embark in an expedition from which the greatest advantages might be expected. In consequence of this intimation, and their high reputation for courage and success, they collected in a short time, by their united interest, six hundred and sixty followers. This body of men, the largest the Buccaneers had hitherto been able to muster, sailed for the gulph of Venezuela in eight vessels, the largest of which carried only ten guns. This gulph runs a considerable way into the country, and communicates with the lake of Maracaybo by a narrow strait. That strait is defended by a castle called la Barra, which the Buccaneers took, after an obstinate defence, and nailed up the cannon. They then reembarked, passed the bar, and came to the city of Maracaybo, built on the western coast of the lake, at the distance of about ten leagues from its mouth. This city, which had become populous and flourishing by its trade in hides, tobacco, and cacao, they found entirely deserted. The inhabitants informed of the danger that threatened them, had retired with their effects to the other side of the bay. If the Buccaneers had not spent a fortnight in riot and debauch, they would have found at Gibraltar, a town near the extremity of the lake, every thing that the people of Maracaybo had carried off, in order to prevent it from being made plunder. On the contrary, by their delay, they met with fortifications newly erected; which they had, indeed, the satisfaction of reducing at the expence of a great deal of blood, but without any other consolatory advantage, the inhabitants having removed to a distance the most valuable part of their property. Exasperated at this disappointment, the Buccaneers set fire to Gibraltar, and Maracaybo would have shared the same fate

* Hist. Buccaneers, part II. c. 1. Some particulars, which the author has not elsewhere met with, in this and other stories relative to the Buccaneers, are borrowed from Raynal, on a supposition that he is well informed, though he has not produced his authorities.

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had it not been ransomed. Besides the sum they received for its ransom, they also carried with them all the crosses, pictures, and bells of the churches*; intending, as they said, to build a chapel in the island of Tortuga, and to consecrate this part of their spoils to sacred purposes. Like other ravagers of more exalted character, they had no idea of the absurdity of offering to Heaven those things which had been procured by a violation of its laws—the fruits of robbery and murder!

While Lolonois and his followers were idly dissipating at Tortuga, the spoils which they had acquired on the coast of Venezuela, Morgan, the most renowned of the English Buccaneers †, sailed from Jamaica to attack Porto Bello. His measures were so well concerted, that he surprised the centinels, and made himself master of the city, before the Spaniards could put themselves in a posture of defence. In order to reduce with the same facility the chief castle, into which many of the principal citizens had retired with their most valuable effects, and all the plate belonging to the churches, Morgan bethought himself of a stratagem that discovers his knowledge of national characters, as well as of human nature in general. He compelled the priests, nuns, and other women, whom he had taken prisoners, to plant the scaling ladders against the walls, from a persuasion that the gallantry and superstition of the Spaniards, would never suffer them to fire at the objects of their love and veneration. But he found himself deceived: the governor, who was a resolute soldier, used his utmost endeavour to destroy every one who approached the works. Morgan, however, and his four hundred followers, who on this occasion were all Englishmen, carried the place by storm, after an obstinate resistance from the Spanish garrison, many of whom died by the governor with their swords in their hands. The plunder and ransom amounted to two hundred and fifty thousand pesos in silver, besides a vast quantity of valuable merchandise ‡.

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With this booty Morgan returned to Jamaica, where he immediately planned a new enterprise. Understanding that Lolonois had been disappointed in the plunder of Maracaybo, by his imprudent delay, he resolved to surprise that place. For this purpose he collected fifteen small vessels, and nine hundred and sixty men. These entered the gulph of Venezuela unobserved, silenced the fort that defended the passage to the lake of Maracaybo, and found the town as formerly deserted. But they were so fortunate as to discover the principal citi-

A. D. 1669,

* Hist. Buccaneers, part II. chap. 1.

† Henry Morgan, afterwards Sir Henry, was a native of the principality of Wales, and the son of a rich yeoman of good family; but having a dislike to the tranquil life of a farmer, he wandered, while a youth, towards the sea-coast, and engaged himself on board a ship bound for Barbadoes. The captain there sold him, according to the custom of those times. When the term of his servitude was expired, he went to Jamaica, and joined the Buccaneers, among whom he soon acquired such reputation as to be chosen captain; and his life was distinguished by a train of uninterrupted success, as well as by such great and daring enterprises as are unequalled even in the history of the Buccaneers. Before his expedition against Porto Bello, he had taken the town of Puerto del Principe, where he acquired more glory than booty. After he settled at Jamaica, he was knighted by that prince of pleasure and whim, Charles II.

‡ Hist. Buccaneers, part II. c. 6.

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A. D. 1669.

zens, and the greater part of the wealth, in the neighbouring woods. Not content however with this, Morgan proceeded to Gibraltar, which he found in the same desolate condition, and where the most atrocious cruelties were practised, in order to extort from such of the inhabitants as had been seized, a discovery of their treasures. After continuing these horrid persecutions, to very little advantage, for the space of five weeks, Morgan returned to Maracaybo, where he was informed that three Spanish men of war were arrived at the entrance of the lake, and that the fort was again put in a posture of defence.

The heart of the bravest Buccaneer sunk within him at this intelligence, which was confirmed by a boat sent to reconnoitre the enemy. The intrepidity of Morgan's spirit, however, did not forsake him, though he considered his condition as desperate. He boldly sent a letter to Don Alonzo del Campo, the Spanish admiral, demanding of him a ransom, for the city of Maracaybo. The admiral's answer was resolute, and excluded all hope of working upon his fears. "I am come," said he, "to dispute your passage out of the lake; and I have the means of doing it: nevertheless, if you will submit to surrender with humility all the booty and prisoners you have taken, I will suffer you to pass, and permit you to retire to your own country, without trouble or molestation. But if you reject this offer, or hesitate to comply, I will command boats from Charcas, in which I will embark my troops, and coming to Maracaybo, will put every man of you to the sword. This is my final and absolute resolution. Be prudent therefore, and do not abuse my bounty with ingratitude. I have with me," added he, "very good soldiers, who desire nothing more ardently than to revenge on you and your people, all the cruelties and depredations, which you have committed upon the Spanish nation in America*."

As soon as Morgan received this letter, he called together his followers; and after acquainting them with its contents, desired them to deliberate on the matter: whether they would chuse to give up all their plunder, in order to obtain their liberty, or fight for it. They unanimously answered, that they would rather lose the last drop of their blood, than resign a booty which had been purchased with so much peril. Morgan, however, sensible of his desperate situation, endeavoured to compromise the matter, but without effect. The Spanish admiral continued to insist on his first conditions. When Morgan was informed of this, he coolly replied, "If Don Alonso will not permit me to pass, I will find means to pass it without him." He accordingly made a division of the spoil, that each man might have his own property to defend; and having filled a vessel which he had taken from the enemy, with preparations of gun-powder and other combustible materials, he advanced to the entrance of the lake; burnt two of the Spanish ships, took one, and by affecting to disembark troops, in order to attempt the fort, diverted the attention of the garrison to the land side, while he passed with all his fleet on the other, without receiving any damage†.

* "Dated on board the royal ship, named the Magdalen, lying at anchor at the entrance of the lake of Maracaybo, this 24th of April, 1669." Hist. Buccaneers, part II. c. 7.

† Hist. Buccaneers, part II. c. 7.

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A. D. 1670.

Morgan's good fortune, as is usual in all human affairs, instead of satisfying him, made him only aspire after greater things. This disposition was favoured by the condition of his followers, who having squandered all their money in gaming and debauchery *, daily importuned him to conduct them to some new enterprise. He accordingly fitted out a considerable fleet, and found no difficulty in procuring as many followers as he could take on board. With this fleet which consisted of thirty seven vessels, and two thousand men, he sailed to the island of St. Catherine, where the Spaniards confined their malefactors. This place was so strongly fortified, that it ought to have held out several months against a considerable army; but the governor was so much intimidated by the appearance of Morgan, at the head of a thousand resolute men, that he sent privately to concert measures, how he might surrender the place, without incurring the imputation of cowardice. The result of this consultation was, that Morgan in the night time, should attack a fort at some distance; that the governor should fall out of the citadel to defend a post of so much consequence; that the assailants should then attack him in the rear, take him prisoner, and summon the garrison to surrender. This farce was admirably carried on. The Spaniards, without being exposed to any danger, appeared to have done their duty; and the Buccaneers, after having totally ruined the fortifications, and put on board their vessels a prodigious quantity of warlike stores, which they had found in the place, steered their course towards the river Chagre, the only channel that could conduct them to Panama, the destined object of their enterprise.

At the entrance of this river stood a castle, built upon a steep rock, against which the waves of the sea continually beat. A post so important was not neglected by the Spaniards; it was defended by an officer whose abilities were equal to his courage, and by a garrison that deserved such a commander. The Buccaneers here met with a resistance, that could only have been surmounted by their valour and perseverance; and it was even doubtful whether they should succeed, or be obliged to raise the siege, when a lucky incident proved favourable to their glory and their fortune. The castle was accidentally set on fire, the governor killed; and Panama as well as Chagre taken in the manner already related †. One circumstance, however, worthy of being remembered, did not enter into that narration: the savage Morgan fell in love with one of his fair captives; and as neither his person nor character were calculated to inspire the object of his attachment with favourable sentiments towards him, he pleaded his passion in vain, and at last resolved to second his affiduities by a seasonable mixture of violence. "Stop, rufian,"—cried she, as she wildly sprung from his arms;—"stop! thinkest thou that thou canst ravish from me mine honour as thou hast wrested from me my fortune and my liberty? No!—be assured that my soul shall sooner be separated from this body :"—and she drew out a poniard from her bosom, which she would have plunged into his heart, had he not avoided the blow.

* Morgan himself appears to be the only Buccaneer who possessed any share of economy.

† Book II. chap. iii.

Morgan's tenderness was now changed into cruelty. Though his desires were as ardent as ever, and even inflamed by opposition, instead of those attentions which he had at first made use of in order to subdue his amiable captive, he commanded her to be thrown into a loathsome dungeon, and allowed no more food than was merely necessary to sustain life. Still, however, she continued inflexible; and the Buccaneers expressing their resentment at being kept so long in a state of inactivity by a caprice which they could not comprehend, Morgan was under the necessity of listening to their complaints, and abandoning his pursuit. They set out with six hundred prisoners, the greater part of whom were ransomed a few days after, and arrived at the mouth of the Chagre with an immense booty.

Feb. 24.
A. D. 1671.

This booty was now divided, after every one had been searched, not excepting Morgan himself, by whose order the scrutiny had been made. The shares, however, were not on that account more equitable. Morgan distributed only what his avarice dictated, and the share of a common man did not exceed fifty pounds sterling. Exasperated by the disappointment which such a pitiful dividend occasioned, after so much danger and fatigue, the Buccaneers publicly accused him of defrauding them of the most valuable part of the plunder. Morgan was alike deaf to their complaints and their reproaches; but afraid that so much ill humour might end in a mutiny, he went privately on board his own ship, and with three others, which he had secured in his interest, set sail for Jamaica*.

The air of authority and resolution which Morgan assumed on this occasion, disconcerted his associates so much, that they did not offer to pursue him. The French Buccaneers would willingly have attempted revenge, but they were sensible of their inferiority at sea: they were therefore obliged to console themselves for their loss, by the hopes of future plunder. They accordingly retired to the island of Tortuga, whence they made several expeditions. But these were all comparatively trifling, till the year 1683, when they undertook one of the greatest consequence.

The plan of this expedition was formed by Van Horn, a native of Ostend, who had spent the greater part of his life among the French Buccaneers. His natural intrepidity would never permit him to suffer the least signs of timidity in any of his followers. In the heat of an engagement he went about his ship, observed his men, and killed with his own hand such as shrunk at the appearance of danger. This extraordinary discipline made him the terror of the coward, and the idol of the brave. No less generous than valiant, he freely shared with the men of spirit and courage the vast riches procured by so warlike a disposition. In his piratical excursions, he commonly sailed in a frigate, which was his own property; but a greater force being necessary to carry into execution the new enterprise which he had projected, he associated himself with Grammont, Godfrey, and Jonqué, three Frenchmen, distinguished by their exploits, and with Law-

* Hist. Buccaneers, part III. chap. v. vi. Morgan is said to have carried to Jamaica with him four hundred thousand pesos, on his own account. He never afterward engaged in any piratical expedition.

rence de Graff, a Dutchman, who had signalized himself more than either of them.

Twelve hundred Buccaneers, under these famous commanders, sailed in six ships for Vera Cruz. The darkness of the night favoured their landing, which was effected at the distance of three leagues from the town, whither they arrived without being discovered. The governor's person, the fort, the barracks, and the posts of greatest consequence—every thing, in a word, that could either make or occasion resistance, were taken by break of day. All the citizens, men, women, and children were shut up in the churches, whither they had fled for shelter. At the door of each church were placed barrels of gun-powder; and a Buccaneer, with a lighted match in his hand, stood ready to set fire to it, and blow up the building, on the smallest appearance of an insurrection. These precautions being taken, the city was pillaged with safety. After they had collected whatever was most valuable, they made a proposal to the inhabitants confined in the churches, to ransom their lives, and purchase their liberty, by a contribution of two million of pesos. Those unfortunate people, who had neither ate nor drank for three days, cheerfully accepted the terms that were offered them. Half of the money was paid the same day, and the other half was expected from the interior parts of the country, when a considerable body of troops appeared on an eminence, advancing towards the city, and near the port a fleet of seventeen ships from Europe.

At the sight of this armament the Buccaneers, without any marks of surprise, quietly retreated to their vessels with fifteen hundred slaves, which they carried off them with as a trifling indemnification for the remainder of the money they had been promised, the settling of which they referred to a more favourable opportunity; for those ruffians sincerely believed, that whatever they pillaged, or exacted by force of arms upon the coasts where they made a descent, was their lawful property, and that God and their arms gave them an undoubted right not only to the capital of such contributions as they compelled the inhabitants to sign a written agreement to fulfil, but even to the interest of that part of the sum which remained unpaid. Their retreat from Vera Cruz was equally glorious and daring. They boldly sailed through the midst of the Spanish fleet, which let them pass without firing a gun. The Spaniards were indeed happy in having escaped without any other inconvenience than what arose from their fears. Nor would this have been the case, if the vessels of the Buccaneers had not been laden with silver, and those of the flota with European commodities, which were less easily converted into money. They had too much to lose; and in their own opinion, too little to gain, to put all on the hazard of a battle*.

Scarce had a year elapsed, after the return of these ravagers from Vera Cruz, when they were seized with the rage of going to plunder the coasts of the South Sea. The incentives to such an expedition are sufficiently obvious; but it is somewhat remarkable, that both the French and English Buccaneers, and the

particular associations of the two nations, had formed the plan at the same time, without any communication, intercourse, or design of acting in concert with each other. Some of those adventurers entered the southern ocean by the isthmus of Darien, others by the Straits of Magellan; and if their intrepidity had been uniformly directed, by a skilful commander, to one object, it cannot be doubted but they might have deprived the Spaniards of their most valuable settlements. But their disorderly character was an invincible obstacle against such an union: the French and English were perpetually quarrelling*; and those of each nation always formed themselves into distinct bodies, who acted together, or separated, as the most trivial accident or caprice directed. Groigniet, Lecuyer, Picard, and Le Sage, were the most distinguished leaders among the French; and David, Samms, Peter Henry, Wilmot, and Townly, among the English.

Such of these adventurers as had got into the South Sea by the isthmus of Darien, seized upon the first vessels they found upon the coast. Those who had entered in their own vessels, by the Straits of Magellan, were not much better provided. Weak however as they were, they beat repeatedly the squadrons that were fitted out against them. But these victories were prejudicial to them; as besides being attended with loss, they interrupted their navigation. When no more ships appeared on the ocean, they were obliged to make descents upon the coasts, in order to procure provisions; and to go by land to plunder those cities, whither the wealth of the country was conveyed. They successively took and pillaged Seppa, Puebla-Nuevo, Leon, Granada, Puebla-Viejo, Chiriquito, Leparso, Villia, Nicoya, Tecoaiteca, Muemeluna, Chiloteca, New Segovia, and Guayaquil, the most important of all these places, the greater part of which are now inconsiderable†. Some of them were taken by surprise, and many of them deserted by their inhabitants, who fled at the sight of the enemy; taking the precaution, however, to carry off their most valuable effects.

The Spaniards, indeed, never ventured to defend themselves, unless they were at least twenty to one, and even then they were generally routed. They were so much enervated by ease and affluence, that they had lost all ideas of the military art, and were almost unacquainted with the use of fire-arms. They were, if possible, more ignorant and cowardly than the Americans whom they trampled upon. This pusillanimity was increased by the terrors with which the name of Buccaneer inspired them. The monks had painted them in the same colours in

* One of the chief reasons that made us disagree," says Ravenau de Luffan, who made one of the party, "was the impiety of the English against our religion; for they made no scruple, when they got into a church, to cut down the arms of a crucifix with their sabres, or to shoot them down with their fusils and pistols, bruising and maiming the images of the saints in the same manner." Voy. des Elibust. chap. 1. This is a precious picture of the inconsistency of human nature, and a proof how little connection there frequently is between religion and morality. It does not appear that those pious plunderers, who were shocked at seeing the image of a saint maimed, were more tender of the persons or properties of their fellow creatures, or ever attempted to restrain their impious associates from any act of injustice or inhumanity.

† Voy. des Elibust. par Ravenau de Luffan.

BOOK III.

which they represented devils--as men-eaters, and beings who were destitute even of the human form *. Such a picture, the offspring of a wild and affrighted imagination, equally affected every mind with aversion and terror. The women, however, in this, as in all cases where they are abused by false representations of man, flew to the opposite extreme, as soon as they were undeceived, and clasped in their amorous arms the murderers of their husbands and brothers. They found that the Buccaneers were men, and some of them handsome ones: they proved them as lovers; and, like most of the sex, they gave themselves little trouble to distinguish between appetite and affection. Charmed with the ardour of a set of plunderers, whose every passion was in excess, they did not part without tears of agony, from the warm embrace of their piratical paramours, to return into the cool paths of common life †.

As the Spaniards usually fled on the approach of the enemy, they knew of no other method of revenging themselves, but by burning or cutting in pieces a Buccaneer. Accordingly, as soon as they quitted the place they had pillaged, if any of them had been killed in the attack, the body was dug up again, and mangled in different parts, or made to pass through the various kinds of torture that would have been inflicted upon the pirate, if taken while alive. This rage, equally impotent and childish, served only to embolden and inflame the Buccaneers, who no sooner took a town than they set it on fire, unless a sum proportioned to its value was given to save it. The prisoners taken in battle were massacred without mercy, if not ransomed by the governor, or some of the inhabitants of the province: and gold, pearls, or precious stones were the only things accepted for the payment of such ransom. Silver was so common as to be despised ‡, and was besides too cumbersome, in case they should have occasion to return home over land. In a word, the train of human events, which seldom leave guilt unpunished, or adversity without a consolation for its sufferings, retaliated the crimes committed by the Spaniards in the conquest of the New World: and the Indians saw themselves fully revenged on their tyrants, by means of that very gold which had cemented the fetters of their servitude, at the same time that it rendered their depressed condition more grievous and intolerable.

* Raveneau de Lussan, chap. iv.

† Raveneau de Lussan, Voy. des Flibust. chap. iv. v. In this respect the Spanish ladies were not singular. The women of Mexico and Peru met with no less complacency the ardour of the first Spaniards; and in more ancient times, the Phrygian damsels solaced themselves in the arms of the Greeks, while Troy was in flames:—and woman is still woman. If the author might risk a sportive conjecture on this subject, he would say, That as love in the language of every people, is represented under the similitude of war and conquest, and beauty as the proper reward of valour, perhaps the ladies think the conquerors of their country have an unquestionable right to their affections; or perhaps their simple minds not being able to separate the idea of gallantry in love from that of gallantry in war, believe that a hero in one way, must also be a hero in the other.

‡ “We made so little account of it,” says Raveneau de Lussan, “that we thought it not worth our while to take along with us a great quantity of plate, with which the town of Quayaquil was full.” Voy. Flibust. c. v.

It happened, however, in this as it generally does in events of a like nature, that those who committed such outrages, did not long enjoy the fruits of them. Many of the Buccaneers died in the course of these piracies, from the effects of the climate, from distress or debauchery; some of them were ship-wrecked in passing the straits of Magellan, and by Cape Horn; and most of those who attempted to return to the north sea by land, fell into the ambuscade that was laid for them, and lost either their lives or the booty they had acquired*, so that the English and French colonies gained very little by an expedition that lasted four years, and found themselves deprived of their bravest inhabitants.

While these piracies were committed on the Southern Ocean, the Northern was threatened with the same from Grammont. He was a native of Paris, by birth a gentleman, and had distinguished himself in a military capacity in Europe; but his passion for wine, women, and gaming had obliged him to join the pirates. His virtues perhaps were sufficient to have atoned for his vices. He was affable, polite, eloquent, generous and brave. His valour and abilities soon made him be considered as the chief of the French Buccaneers. As soon as it was known that he had taken up arms, he was immediately joined by a number of enterprising adventurers, whom he meant to lead against the Spanish settlements on the Gulph of Mexico; but the governor of Tortuga and the French part of Hispaniola, who had at length prevailed upon his master to approve of the project, equally wise and just, of fixing the pirates to some place, and inducing them to become planters, was desirous of preventing the concerted expedition, and forbade it in the king's name. Grammont, who had a greater share of understanding than his associates, was not on that account more inclined to comply, and sternly replied, "How can Lewis disapprove of a design he is unacquainted with, and which was planned only a few days ago?"

Highly pleased with this answer, the Buccaneers immediately embarked to attack Campeachy. They landed without opposition; and at some distance from the coast, they were attacked by eight hundred Spaniards, who were routed and pursued to the town, where both parties entered at the same time. The cannon found there was instantly levelled against the citadel, though without much effect; and the Buccaneers were contriving some stratagem to enable them to become masters of the place, when intelligence was brought that it was abandoned. There remained in it only a gunner, an Englishman, and a man of such signal courage, that he chose rather to expose himself to the rage of the Buccaneers, than to desert his post. Grammont received him with marks of distinction; generously released him; gave him up all his effects, and besides made him some valuable presents: such influence have valour and fidelity on the minds even of those

A. D. 1685.

* A stronger image of the distress, which those adventurers experienced, cannot be offered to the mind than that drawn by Ravenau de Lussan, who does not appear to have had less fortitude than any of his associates. "I could not," says he, "for the space of fifteen days, take my return for any thing but an illusion; and it proceeded so far with me, that I shunned sleep, lest I should find myself, when I awoke, again in those countries, out of which I was so happily delivered." *Voy. des Flibust. c. vi.*

BOOK III. who seem to violate all the laws of society, and to sport with the rights of humanity !

The conquerors of Campeachy spent two months in searching all the environs of the city, for the distance of twelve or fifteen leagues, and seizing every thing that the inhabitants thought they had secured in their flight. When all the plunder was deposited on board the ships, the Buccaneers made a proposal to the governor of the province, who still kept the field with nine hundred men, to ransom the capital. His refusal determined them to burn it, and demolish the citadel. Meantime the French, on the festival of St. Lewis, being celebrating the anniversary of their king, in the transports of their patriotism, intoxication, and loyalty, burnt an immense pile of logwood ; a part, and no inconsiderable one of their booty *. After this singular and extravagant instance of folly, they returned to Hispaniola, which about that time they began to distinguish by the name of St. Domingo, formerly applied only to the capital.

The little advantage which the English and French Buccaneers had derived from their late expeditions upon the continent, had insensibly led them to have recourse to their old piratical excursions upon the sea. Both were employed in attacking such ships of all nations as they met with, when a particular train of circumstances engaged the French a new in that course, which every thing had conspired to render disagreeable to them. The powerful influence that the words glory, country, and gold carry with them, determined twelve hundred of these daring adventurers to join a squadron of seven ships that sailed from France in 1697, under the command of Mons. Pointis, to attack the famous city of Carthagena. This was the most difficult enterprise that could be attempted in the New World. The situation of the port, the strength of the place, the intemperature of the climate, were obstacles that seemed insurmountable, without a vastly superior force. Nothing, however, appeared impossible to Buccaneers. The place was taken, and all mankind agreed in conferring upon them the honour of the conquest ; but they were basely deprived of the advantage resulting from it. The rapacious commander, who had gained a booty estimated at two millions of pounds sterling, scrupled not, as soon as he had set sail, to offer forty thousand crowns, as the share of those who had been the chief instruments of his success.

Exasperated at this treatment, the Buccaneers resolved immediately to board the admiral's ship, which was at that time too far distant from the rest to receive immediate succour from them ; and Pointis was in danger of being massacred, when one of the pirates, who had possibly some regard for that officer, exclaimed, " Brethren ! why should we attack this rascal ?— he has carried off nothing that belongs to us. He has left our share at Carthagena, and there we must go and recover it." This proposal was received with general applause. A savage joy at once succeeded that sullen melancholy which had overcast them, and without farther deliberation, they sailed towards the place which they had so

* Hist. Flibust.

recently plundered. As soon as they had entered the city, which surrendered without resistance, they shut up all the male inhabitants in the great church, and addressed them in the following words.

“We are sensible that you consider us as people void of faith, and of all religion; as devils rather than men. The opprobrious language which you affect to use, when you speak of us, and the refusal you have made to treat with us concerning the surrender of your city, are strong indications of the sentiments you entertain in regard to our character. Be not, however, too obstinate in your opinion. You see us here armed, and capable of avenging ourselves. The paleness visible in your countenances convinces us that you expect the most severe treatment, and your conscience testifies that you deserve it. We shall soon undeceive you with respect to ourselves, and convince you, that we do not merit the infamous appellations with which you stigmatize us, but that they belong rather to the commander under whom we lately fought. The traitor has deceived us. Though he owes the conquest of this city to our valour, yet he refuses to share the spoils of it with us, and by this instance of injustice has compelled us to return to you. We do it with regret, and the moderation we shall shew will be a proof of it. We pledge our faith to you, that we will immediately retire, after you have paid us five millions of livres*. This is our utmost demand: but if you refuse a request so reasonable, the greatest distresses await you; the cause of which you must ascribe to yourselves, and the infamous Pointis, whom you are at liberty to load with all kinds of execrations†.”

After this discourse, the most venerable priest in the city mounted the pulpit, and exerted all the influence which his character, his authority, and his eloquence gave him, to persuade his hearers to yield up, without reserve, their gold, silver, and jewels; but the collection which was made, in consequence of his oration, not furnishing the sum required, the city was ordered to be plundered. From the houses, the Buccaneers proceeded to pillage the churches, and even the tombs, but not with that success they expected; and they concluded by torturing the chief citizens. At length, despairing to add any thing to the booty they had already acquired, by these various means, they set sail. But unfortunately they met with a fleet of Dutch and English ships; and as both those nations were then in alliance with Spain, most of their vessels were either taken or sunk, with all the riches they had on board. The rest escaped in a miserable condition to Hispaniola‡.

This was the last memorable event in the history of the Buccaneers. The entire separation of the English and French, when the war on account of the prince of Orange divided the two nations; the successful means which both made use of to promote the cultivation of land in their colonies, by means of those enterprising spirits, and the prudence they shewed in fixing the most distinguished a-

* About two hundred and eighteen thousand, seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling.

† Hist. Flibust. Raynal, liv. x.

‡ Id. *ibid.*

among them, by intrusting them with civil and military employments—all these, and various other circumstances, besides the difficulty of supplying the place of the remarkable persons who were daily dropping off, concurred to put an end to the most extraordinary society that ever existed among men. Without any regular system of government, without laws, without any permanent subordination, and even without any fixed revenue, the Buccaneers subjected to their arms cities and strong holds which have baffled the greatest efforts of national force. They supplied the want of numbers and of power by their activity, their vigilance, and bravery. If conquest, not plunder, had been the object of their enterprises, they could have conquered all America. In a word, they were a people wholly distinct in history; but a people whose duration was so transient, that their glory, as it were, lasted only for a moment.

The destructive wars that raged in Europe towards the end of the last and the beginning of the present century, prevented any vigorous efforts being made by the contending powers in America; and the treaty of Utrecht, which terminated their differences, put a stop to the depredations of the French and English colonies on each other. The years that succeeded this treaty revived the ideas of the golden age in the world; which would generally enjoy sufficient tranquility, if the Europeans did not disturb its peace, by carrying their arms and their dissensions into every quarter of the earth. The fields were now no more covered with dead bodies; the harvest of the husbandman was not laid waste; the mariner ventured to sail in every sea, without dread of pirates or of enemies; and mothers no more saw their sons forced from their arms, to lavish their blood at the caprice of a weak monarch, or an ambitious minister. Nations no longer united to gratify the passions of their sovereigns. Mankind lived together for some time like brethren, as far as their pride, their prejudices, and their interests would let them.

Though this general happiness may chiefly perhaps be ascribed to those who held the reins of government, the progress of reason also contributed in part to produce it. Philosophy then began to be laid open, and sentiments of universal benevolence to be adopted. Some writings of a liberal kind had appeared, which contributed to polish and refine the manners of the people. A spirit of moderation, thus communicated, had inspired men with a love of the more useful and pleasing arts of life, and abated at least the desire which they formerly possessed, of destroying each other. The thirst of blood seemed to be assuaged; and all nations, profiting by the discoveries they had made, ardently set about the improvement of their population, agriculture, and manufactures. This spirit of activity exerted itself more especially in the West India islands.

The states on the European continent can subsist, and even flourish, when the flame of war is kindled in their neighbourhood, and on their frontiers, because the principal objects of their attention are the culture of their lands and the encouragement of their manufactures, in order to supply their subsistence and internal consumption; but the case is very different with regard to those settlements, which different nations have made in the great archipelago of America. There life and property are equally precarious; few of the requisites for subsistence are

the produce of the soil; and neither wearing apparel, nor the instruments of husbandry, are so much as made in the country. All the commodities of these colonies are intended for exportation; and nothing but an easy and safe communication with Africa, with the northern coasts of America, and with Europe, can procure them that plentiful supply of the necessaries of life, and that free circulation of those superfluities which they give in exchange for them, that is necessary to their prosperity. The more they had suffered from the effects of that long and desolating war, which had thrown every thing into confusion, the more eager they were to repair their losses. Their progress, however, would have been comparatively slow, had not the hopes entertained that the general weakness would insure a lasting tranquillity, encouraged the European merchants to furnish them with goods in advance.

These assistances rapidly increased the prosperity of the West India islands, till a storm that had been for some time gathering, broke out in 1739, and disturbed once more the peace of the world. The English colonies, but chiefly Jamaica, had carried on a contraband trade with the Spanish settlements in South America, which custom had long made them consider as lawful. Meantime the court of Madrid, becoming better acquainted with its interests, concerted measures for putting a stop to this pernicious intercourse, by appointing *Guarda Costas*, in the manner already explained*. This precaution was certainly prudent, but it ought to have been put in execution with equity. If the ships intended to prevent that illicit traffic had only seized upon such vessels as were concerned in it, the measure would have merited approbation. But the abuses inseparable from violent councils, the eagerness of gain, and perhaps too a spirit of revenge, incited the Spaniards to stop, under various pretexts, many ships which had a legal destination.

England, whose security, power, and glory is founded upon commerce, could not very patiently suffer even her usurpations to be restrained; but she was now particularly incensed, when she found that these restraints were converted into hostilities, and carried to an excess inconsistent with the laws of nations. In London, and in both houses of parliament, general complaints were made against the authors of them, accompanied with invectives against the minister who suffered them. Sir Robert Walpole, who had long ruled Great Britain, and whose character and abilities were better adapted to peace than war, and the Spanish ministry, who shewed less resolution as the storm increased, concerted together terms of reconciliation, which were signed at Pardo, in January 1738.

Those terms, which were equally inconclusive and inglorious, excited the general resentment of the English nation, and of the more virtuous and discerning part of both houses of parliament, who called aloud for vengeance. But the minister appeared cold, phlegmatic, and timid, though Britain was in a condition that ought to have left few apprehensions with regard to the issue of a war; though her magazines were filled with military stores, and her dock-yards

* Book II. chap. i. p. 368.

BOOK III.

in the most flourishing condition; though her fleets were all manned and ready for service, and commanded by experienced officers, who waited only for orders to set sail, and spread the terror and glory of her flag to the extremities of the earth. Walpole, however, must not be suspected of directly betraying his country, though his pusillanimous conduct had nearly the same effect. He knew that war would involve him in such difficulties as must inevitably endanger his administration. The treasure, which he now employed in domestic purposes, must in that event be expended in foreign armaments; the wheels of corruption, that vast machine on which he had raised his influence, would no longer move; the opposition in parliament would of course gain ground; and the imposition of fresh taxes, necessary for the support of the war, fill up the measure of popular indignation against his person and ministry.

Moved by these considerations, without being bribed, as his enemies affirmed, by the court of Madrid, Walpole not only industriously avoided a rupture with Spain by memorials, negotiations, and by agreeing to terms unworthy of the dignity of the British crown, but ventured to defend that convention in parliament. He asserted, that the ministry had reconciled the peace of their country with her true interest; that this peace was attended with all the advantages which the most successful war could have procured; that future ages would consider the period of which he spoke as the most glorious in history, and do justice to the counsels that produced the happy event*. He was obliged, however, at last to give way to the voice of the nation; and admiral Vernon was sent to the West Indies, in order to assume the command of the squadron in those latitudes, and to annoy the trade and settlements of the Spaniards.

This gentleman had rendered himself considerable in the house of commons, by loudly condemning all the measures of the minister, and bluntly speaking his sentiments upon every occasion, without any respect of persons, or even regard to decorum. He was accounted a good officer, and this boisterous manner seemed to confer on him a particular merit with many of his countrymen. As he had once commanded a squadron at Jamaica, he was perfectly acquainted with the coasts of America; and in a debate upon the Spanish depredations he affirmed, that he would undertake to reduce Porto Bello with six ships. This offer was echoed from the mouths of all the members in the opposition, and resounded from every corner of the kingdom. Vernon became the idol of the people: and the minister, in order to appease their clamours, sent him to fulfil his bravado; pleased with an opportunity of removing such a troublesome censor from the house of commons, and not without hopes, as may be supposed, that he would fail in his enterprise, and draw disgrace on himself and his party.

The event, however, proved otherwise. Admiral Vernon sailed from Jamaica with no more than six ships, and two hundred and forty soldiers; yet such was the pusillanimity of the Spaniards, and the romantic bravery of the English

* Parliamentary Debates for 1738.

tars, who scaled the walls in a manner thought impracticable, that he made himself master of Porto Bello almost without bloodshed. The joy of the nation was excessive on this occasion: the two houses of parliament congratulated his majesty on the success of his arms; the people were confirmed in their opinion of Vernon, and his good fortune determined the government to support him. The taking of Porto Bello was only a prelude to greater enterprises. Nothing less was resolved upon than the entire destruction of the Spaniards in the New World. For this purpose, a squadron was dispatched to the South Sea under commodore Anson, in order to ravage the coasts of Peru and Chili*; and a fleet of twenty-seven sail of the line, commanded by Sir Chaloner Ogle, besides frigates, fire-ships, bomb-ketches, tenders, store-ships, and transports, with upwards of ten thousand land forces on board, was sent to the West Indies to reinforce admiral Vernon. The land forces were commanded by lord Cathcart, a nobleman of approved honour, and great experience in military affairs. The ardour of both soldiers and sailors to come to action was excessive. This ardour drew from Lord Cathcart the following letter to admiral Vernon. "In the troops I bring you, there is spirit, there is good will; which, when properly conducted, will produce, I hope, what the nation expects from us; will make us the glorious instruments for finishing the war, with all the advantages to the public that its happy beginning promises; and with this distinguishing circumstance, that those effects have been owing to *a perfect harmony between the sea and land forces* †."

The want of this harmony proved the ruin of the armament. Lord Cathcart died soon after his arrival at Jamaica, and the command of the land forces unfortunately devolved upon brigadier-general Wentworth; an officer without experience, resolution, or authority, and a man without abilities, but artful and plausible. He had nothing in common with Vernon but his obstinacy, and as great a contempt for the sea, as the admiral had for the land-service. These two commanders, whose powers were discretionary, determined to attack Carthagena, after being reinforced with some troops from the English colonies in America. A descent was accordingly made on the island of Tierra Bomba, near the mouth of the harbour, known by the name of Bocca Chica, or Littlemouth, from the narrowness of the entrance, which was fortified in the strongest manner with castles, batteries, booms, chains, cables, and ships of war. Several of the smaller forts were reduced by Sir Chaloner Ogle, a gallant officer, to whom that service was committed. Batteries were now erected against the principal fortifications, and the Barradera-battery, and fort St. Joseph were successively taken by storm. A breach was made in Castillo Grande, and the British troops, supported by the seamen, advanced to the assault. Contrary to all expectation, they found the works abandoned. The Spanish ships, which lay across the

* Anson's fleet was ruined in passing Cape Horn, which some months sooner might have been doubted without any danger; but if one may judge of what he could have performed, with his whole squadron, from what he actually executed with a single ship, it seems highly probable, that he would have shaken, at least, the empire of the Spaniards on the South Sea.

† History of Jamaica.

mouth of the harbour, were either taken or destroyed; the passage was opened; the fleet entered without farther opposition, and the troops were disembarked within a mile of the city.

After surmounting such incredible difficulties, the English thought that little remained but to take possession of Carthagena. A ship was sent express to London with intelligence to this purpose, and public rejoicings were held at Jamaica, and over all the British West Indies. But the animosities which had broke out between the admiral and general, and which every day served only to inflame, disappointed the hopes of the nation, as well as of those engaged in the expedition. Each seemed more eager for the disgrace of his rival than zealous for the honour of his country. The admiral was always putting the general in mind of the necessity of cutting off all communication between the city and the country, and of attacking fort St. Lazarus, by which it was defended. Resolutions in a council of war were taken for that purpose, but nothing was done in consequence of them. A most unaccountable langour, which perhaps in some measure proceeded from the climate, seems to have possessed the troops. The general threw the blame upon the admiral, in not landing their tents, stores, and artillery. Both were doubtless to blame: but if Wentworth, on landing, had immediately attacked the Spaniards, before their panic was over, the English must unquestionably have become masters of the place; whereas the delay of the army gave them time not only to recover their spirits, but to complete a very strong fortification, and to take other precautions for their defence. Nor was the admiral less remiss in his duty, in not sending his ships to batter the town by sea.

Meanwhile the army was employed in erecting a bomb-battery, in order to make a breach in fort St. Lazarus. But the artillery not being yet arrived, nor the battery near completed, the chief engineer gave it as his opinion, that the place might be rendered so much stronger, before the battery could be opened, as to overbalance its advantages. This absurd opinion, which was most likely delivered with a view to save his own reputation, seconded by the importunities of Vernon, determined Wentworth to hazard an assault against the mouths of the Spanish cannon, without discharging a single gun to dismount them, or to open a breach in the walls of the fortification. A wilder resolution could not have been embraced by an army of savages, ignorant of the art of war, and of the destructive power of artillery. Such, however, was the ardour of the British troops, that, if other instances of misconduct had not accompanied this unfoldierlike attempt, there is reason to believe that Carthagena would have been taken. The attack, instead of being made in the night, was delayed till near sun-rising; the scaling-ladders were too short; the wool-packs and granado-shells were left in the rear; and the admiral neglected to divert the attention of the enemy, by battering the city by sea, or even making use of his bomb-ketches. In consequence of these several blunders, and others connected with them, the English troops were exposed to the whole fire of the fort, without the least power of defending themselves, or of annoying the Spaniards. A mere carnage ensued; and though a retreat was soon

soon found necessary, colonel Grant, who commanded the grenadiers, and six hundred brave men were left dead on the field.

The officers of the land forces knew not whether to accuse their general or the admiral; but the number of the troops was now so much reduced, that they perceived all farther hopes of reducing the place must be very doubtful. Besides, the rainy season had begun with such violence as rendered it impossible for them to live on shore; they were therefore reembarked, and the enterprise was relinquished. Vernon, however, in order to vindicate himself from the reproaches of Wentworth, who affirmed that the town might be taken by sea, fitted up the *Galicia*, one of the Spanish ships which he had taken, as a floating battery. On trial it was found, that she could not approach so near the walls as to make any impression upon them; but her shot, and the bombs from the tenders did considerable damage to the houses and churches; and it was with difficulty that the Spaniards prevented their principal magazine from being blown up by a bomb, which fell into a church where it was lodged. Many conjectures, very unfavourable to the character of Vernon, were formed, on account of his desisting from this kind of bombardment, which, in the end, might have rendered the city untenable by the inhabitants. It was farther affirmed, yet more to his prejudice, that the *Galicia* did not lie in the proper station for annoying the enemy; that the water there was indeed too shallow to admit large ships near enough to batter the town with any prospect of success, but that a little towards the left, he might have stationed four or five of his ships of greatest force, within pistol shot of the walls. However this may have been, it is certain, that the admiral ordered the men to be brought off from the *Galicia* in boats, and the cables to be cut; so that she drove with the sea-breeze upon a shoal, where she was soon filled with water*.

After this impertinent experiment, and the reembarkation of the troops, the distempers peculiar to the climate and season began to rage with redoubled fury. Nothing was heard, from ship to ship, but complaints and execrations; the groans of the dying, and the service for the dead: nothing was seen but objects of woe, and images of dejection; and the commanders, who had agreed in nothing else; were unanimous in the expediency of a retreat from this scene of misery and disgrace. The fortifications of the harbour were demolished, and the fleet sailed for Jamaica, to the astonishment and confusion of the English nation. The people were depressed, in proportion to that exuberant hope by which they had been elevated. Nor was any thing afterwards done by the conductors of this unfortunate enterprise, to retrieve the honour of the British arms. Though Vernon was reinforced with three more ships of the line, and Wentworth with three thousand soldiers from England; and though they successively threatened St. Jago de Cuba and Panama, they returned home, without effecting any thing of consequence, after the loss of twenty thousand men†.

* Smollet, Hist of Eng. book ix. Hist. of Jamaica. Mod. Univ. Hist. vol. XV. folio edit.

† Id. ibid.

Such was the issue of the greatest naval armament that had ever been sent from Britain. England, however, had still sufficient resources to have shook the power of Spain in America; and notwithstanding the assistance of France, to have dictated her own conditions, had not a war broke out on the continent of Europe, in which she unhappily took a share. The disasters and disgraces of that war, together with the losses sustained by her allies, obliged her to conclude a peace, by which she gave up the original object of the war with Spain. In that treaty no mention is made of the right of British subjects to navigate the American seas without being subject to search.

But humiliating as the peace of Aix la-Chapelle was to England, it was not sufficient to quiet the restless ambition of her enemies. The French seem only to have considered it as the means of making encroachments more securely on her back-settlements in America. These encroachments produced a new war in 1755. In the beginning of this war the English were unsuccessful in every quarter; in America, the East Indies, in Germany, and the Mediterranean. The loss of Minorca occasioned universal consternation; and Byng, who had been sent to relieve it, fell a sacrifice to the blunders of the ministry, and the discontents of the people. He was shot on board his own ship. The news of this event, which seemed to revive the memory of the ancient republics, filled all Europe with admiration and horror. The death of Byng, guilty or otherwise, proclaimed in the most alarming manner to those who were employed by the nation, what fate they must expect if they betrayed the confidence reposed in them. Every officer said within himself, when ready to engage, "On this field I will die, rather than with infamy upon a scaffold." The blood of one man accused of cowardice, seemed to have appeased the God of War, and was productive of a spirit of heroism.

This spirit, however, would have been of little avail had it not been properly directed, and accompanied with a principle of union. Dissipation, pleasure, indolence, and often vice and a corruption of manners, occasion warm and frequent connexions in most kingdoms of Europe. The English have less intercourse and connexion with each other, and perhaps less taste for social life than some other nations; but the idea of any project that may be serviceable to the state, in times of danger, immediately unites them, and they seem as if were animated by one soul. All ranks, parties, and sects, contribute to insure its success, and with such ardour and liberality as cannot be paralleled in those countries where the people have no share in the government. This zeal is more remarkably distinguished, when the nation has placed an implicit confidence in the minister who has the direction of public measures. Such a confidence the nation had placed in William Pitt, whom the voice of the people had obtruded on the throne. Pitt had been a favourite in the three kingdoms from his youth, on account of his disinterested patriotism, and his indignation against corruption. He had a soul formed for great designs, and was distinguished by a species of eloquence that never failed to captivate the minds of his hearers, and by a character equally firm and enterprising.

Such was the man destined to wipe off the disgraces of England, and exalt her glory above that of all other nations. He planned such prudent and useful designs; his preparations were conducted with so much foresight and dispatch; his means were so well adapted to the ends he wanted to obtain; he made such a prudent choice of the persons whom he intrusted with his designs; he established such harmony between the land and sea forces, and raised the spirit of the people to such a height, that his whole administration was a series of conquests. These conquests we have only occasion, at present, to consider so far as they relate to the West Indies.

Sensible of the importance of the French sugar colonies to the mother-country, and of the advantages which must accrue to England from the conquest of them, that wise minister ordered an armament to be fitted out, towards the end of the year 1758, for the reduction of Martinico. It consisted of ten ships of the line, under commodore More, and five thousand land forces, commanded by general Hopson; an officer of judgment and experience, but destitute of activity. The attempt upon Martinico was abandoned as impracticable; tho' seemingly with little reason, as the governor possessed neither courage nor capacity, and the inhabitants were in a most miserable condition, in consequence of their communication with France being interrupted by the British fleets. Be that, however, as it may, the troops were reembarked within four and twenty hours after their landing, and the armament directed its course towards the island of Guadeloupe; a less splendid, but not less important object.

The English fleet appeared before the town of Basse Terre, the capital of the island, on the 23d of January 1759, and next day the place was taken, after a terrible cannonading, accompanied with incessant showers of bombs. Never did the commanders of the English navy exert themselves with more intrepidity and judgment, than on this occasion. They left the land forces nothing to do but take possession of the town. The reduction of Basse Terre, however, was not immediately followed by the subjection of Guadeloupe. The slowness, timidity, and irresolution of the operations by land, afforded the fugitive garrison, assisted by the inhabitants, leisure to fortify themselves in a strong pass, that obstructed the communication with the more fertile parts of the island; and the English, despairing of making themselves masters of it on this side, proceeded to attack it in another quarter, known by the name of Grande Terre. Fort Lewis, its chief defence, was taken sword in hand, by the marines and Highlanders, after a short but vigorous cannonading from the fleet.

But the conquerors were again guilty of the same error as formerly: they did not take advantage of the enemy's terror; and they suffered the same inconveniences from their neglect. The event of the expedition was even doubtful, when general Barrington succeeded to the command, in consequence of the death of Hopson, and changed the plan of operations. Though an officer of greater activity and enterprise than his predecessor, he gave up the idea of penetrating into the country: he reembarked his soldiers, and successively attacked the towns and villages upon the coasts.

Every

BOOK III. Every considerable place was reduced; but as every hour was diminishing the small number of the British troops, it was not thought advisable to drive the inhabitants to despair. Very honourable terms of capitulation were therefore granted them, and Guadeloupe was surrendered to his Britannic majesty on the 21st day of April 1759. Marigalante, and some other small islands in the neighbourhood, submitted on the same conditions *. The principal of these were, That the inhabitants should be allowed the free and public exercise of their religion; that they should be indulged in the continuance of their own civil government, and in the possession of all their property and privileges; that they should be subject to no imposts, but those which they had paid under the French government, unless the island was finally ceded to his Britannic majesty, in which case they were to pay the same taxes and imposts as the inhabitants of the English Leeward islands.

After the reduction of Guadeloupe, and its attendant isles, no farther attempt was made against the French West Indies, till the year 1761, when another armament was sent against Martinico. This armament, consisting of eight battallions, under general Monckton, and eighteen ships of the line commanded by admiral Rodney, appeared before the capital of the island on the 16th day of January, 1762. The landing of the troops was effected without much difficulty, and with no considerable loss. To take possession of the eminences which were strongly fortified both by nature and art, and which prevented their approach to Fort Royal, in itself formidable, seemed to be an attempt not so easily to be accomplished. These obstacles however were surmounted, after some warm engagements, and the town, which would soon have been reduced to ashes by the bombs from the higher grounds, capitulated on the 9th of February. The surrender of the capital was soon followed by that of the whole island; which was probably induced to this step, that certainly might have been delayed longer, by the prosperity of Guadeloupe under the British government.

Granada, and the other Leeward Islands that were subject to France, as well as such as were neutral, though peopled by Frenchmen, surrendered without resistance. Even the French colony in Hispaniola, and the only one that the mother country retained in the archipelago of America, seemed ready to fall into the hands of the English. It was generally known to be without any means of defence, either within or without, and therefore incapable of making any resistance. It was sensible of its own weakness, and would have surrendered on the first summons; but the British arms were turned against a more formidable, though perhaps not a more important object. Meanwhile the court of France was equally astonished and alarmed at the losses it had sustained, and at those it foresaw. It had expected such an obstinate defence from its sugar islands as would have

* If it should be observed, that the author quotes no authorities for these more recent transactions, his answer is, That in such events as fall within his own memory and observation, he thinks authorities unnecessary. They may have been related nearly in the same manner, but they are adopted on the testimony of no particular writer.

been superior to every attack. The descendants of those brave adventurers, who had settled these islands, seemed a rampart sufficient to repel all the force of the British empire; and they almost felt a secret satisfaction, that the enemy were directing their efforts towards that quarter.

The plan of attacking Martinico was laid by Mr. Pitt, but he was not in the ministry when it was conquered. The resignation of this great man drew the attention of Europe, and deserves to be considered by every one who investigates the causes and effects of political revolutions. An historian who ventures to write the transactions of his own age, hath seldom, it must be owned, sufficient lights to guide him in regard to the intrigues of state. The councils of kings are so mysterious, that time alone can gradually withdraw the veil that furrounds them. Their ministers faithful depositaries of the secrets with which they have been intrusted, or interested to conceal them, explain them no further than is necessary to mislead the curious inquirer who wishes to discover truth. Whatever penetration he may possess in tracing the source and connexion of events, he is at last reduced to conjecture. If his conjectures happen to be just, still he is ignorant that they are so, or cannot depend upon them; and this degree of uncertainty is scarcely more satisfactory than total ignorance. He must therefore wait till caution and interest, freed from the restraint of silence, shall lay open the secrets of courts:—in a word, till some valuable and original records, wherein are untold the latent springs on which the destiny of nations hath depended, can be produced for public inspection.

One thing we know, that Mr. Pitt rescued England from the lowest sink of misfortune, and raised it to a height of success that astonished the world. He considered the moderation of former statesmen as only a pretence to conceal their indolence or their weakness: and though the people, of whom he was the idol, were sometimes alarmed at his vast and uncommon enterprises, he was not in the least disquieted on that account; because the multitude, in his eyes, was like a torrent, whose course he could direct which way soever he inclined. Perfectly indifferent with respect to fortune, he was by no means so in regard to power. His successes had rendered his administration absolute, and he availed himself of the superiority which he had acquired, in order to excite the ardour of the nation. Little influenced by that species of chimerical philosophy, which pretending to divest itself of the prejudices of country, extends its views to the welfare of the universe, he kept up in the breasts of Englishmen an enthusiasm of patriotism, and a violent aversion against the nation he wanted to humble.

France, no less discouraged by this spirit of inveteracy, which constantly persecuted her, than by the losses she had undergone, found herself obliged to make overtures of peace to Great Britain. This step, however, was not taken before a secret alliance had been concluded with Spain. The peace solicited was therefore no more than a temporary expedient; and both courts were apprehensive that Mr. Pitt would penetrate their views. He did so, yet consented to enter into a negotiation. But the event shewed, as all men of discernment had conjectured, that he did not intend to continue it. His design was only to furnish

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himself with sufficient proofs of the engagements which the two branches of the house of Bourbon had entered into against Great Britain, and to lay them before his country. As soon as he had perfected his intelligence, he broke off the negociation, and proposed an immediate declaration of war against Spain. The superiority of the naval power of England above that of both those kingdoms, and the assurance he had that it would be infinitely better directed, inspired him with this confidence.

Mr Pitt's system appeared to distinguished politicians, the only effectual, and indeed the only reasonable one. Delay seemed to him a work of weakness, perhaps of treachery; but he found in the privy council, men who were willing to act with more deliberation, and who desired a certainty of offence, before they demanded reparation. "Spain," said they, "has yet given no proofs of her hostile intentions; and the English minister at Madrid still continues to assure us of the pacific disposition of that court." These remonstrances were answered by the minister, but without producing the desired conviction. Despairing of being able to raise themselves upon a level with a man to highly esteemed, or of making him stoop to them, his rivals united their forces in order to effect his ruin. As declared attacks would only have turned against themselves, they had recourse to more artful methods: they tried to sour his temper. The natural fire of his character laid him open to such a snare, and he fell into it: he threw up the seals with indignation. If this resignation, as there is too much reason to believe, was the effect of mere peevishness, Mr. Pitt exposed himself to just censure, in not having exerted more self command: if he hoped by that expedient to humble his enemies, he shewed that he possessed more knowledge of business than of men; and if, as he asserted, he resigned, because he would not be responsible for measures which he was no longer allowed to guide, men of cool tempers will be disposed to think he was more strongly attached to his own personal glory, than to the interests of his country. But whatever may have been the cause of his resignation, nothing but the blindest, most unjust, and violent party-spirit, can induce any writer to assert, that the extraordinary success of the British arms, under his administration, was merely the effect of chance.

The council of George III. was divided into parties, who were alike pleased at the resignation of this great man. One party consisted of those, who were at the head of affairs during the former, the other of such as had been taken into favour in the present reign. Disunited, however, as the new ministry were, they soon agreed in the necessity of a declaration of war against Spain. This was a kind of homage which they were compelled to by the superior genius of Mr. Pitt. As experience had evinced the danger of any attempt against the Spanish settlements on the continent of America, the West Indies were destined to be the scene of those new hostilities, and Cuba their particular object. It was readily perceived, that the conquest of this island would secure the command of the Gulph of Mexico; that Spain, whose revenue arises chiefly from her customs, would be deprived of her principal resources; that the whole commerce of

Spanish

Spanish America would fall into the hands of the English, as the inhabitants would chuse rather to deliver up their riches to the conquerors of their country, than to deny themselves those commodities which they had been accustomed to receive from Europe : in a word, that the power of Spain would be so much reduced by this blow, that she would be obliged to submit to any conditions.

Conformable to this idea, a fleet of nineteen ships of the line, eighteen frigates, and about an hundred and fifty transports, with ten thousand land forces on board, which were to be reinforced by four thousand more from North America, assembled off the north west point of Hispaniola, and set sail for the Havana. The command of the fleet was intrusted to admiral Pocock, who had distinguished himself in the East Indies, and the land forces were under the direction of the earl of Albemarle. This formidable armament, which for the sake of expedition, was conducted, with uncommon seamanship, through the Old Channel of Bahama, arrived in sight of those dreadful fortifications that were to be stormed, on the 6th day of June, 1762.

The city of Havana, the principal place in the island of Cuba, and the strongest in the Spanish West Indies, stands towards the bottom of a small bay, that forms one of the safest harbours in the world, and so capacious, that a thousand ships of the largest size, might there commodiously ride at anchor. The entrance into this harbour is by a narrow channel, strongly fortified on every side for about half a mile, which is its length. The mouth of that channel, when visited by the English, was secured by two strong forts ; one on the east side, named the Moro, and another on the west, called the Puntal. The Moro had towards the sea two bastions, and on the land side two others, with a wide and deep ditch cut out of the rock. The Puntal, also surrounded by a ditch, cut in the same manner, was provided with casemates, and every way well calculated for co-operating with the Moro in defence of the port. It had likewise several batteries which opened upon the country, and flanked some part of the town-wall. That wall, which was good for little, twenty-one bastions not much better, a dry ditch of no considerable depth, and a kind of covered way almost in ruins, formed the only defence of the city itself. It has therefore been thought by some military men, that the operations ought to have been begun with the attack of the town by land. But lord Albemarle thought otherwise ; and to attack it by sea was utterly impracticable before the reduction of the forts, as the entrance of the harbour was not only defended by these, but by fourteen Spanish ships of the line, three of which were afterwards sunk in the channel, and a boom laid across it.

Such was the place, which every motive of interest, glory, ambition, impelled the English to subdue, and the Spaniards to defend. The landing, covered by commodore Keppel, brother to the earl of Albemarle, with seven ships, was effected without loss, about six leagues to the eastward of the harbour, while the admiral with the rest of the fleet, amused the enemy, by making a feint of landing towards the west. Next day, about six thousand Spaniards, drawn up very advantageously, attempted to dispute the passage of the English army to the village :

June 7.

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A. D. 1762.

lage of Guanamacoa: but they were soon dispersed; and Albemarle meeting with no farther interruption on his march, began to form the siege of the Moro; which he justly considered as the grand object of the armament, as the reduction of it must infallibly be followed by the surrender of the city; whereas, if he attacked the city first, his army might be so much weakened, as to be unable to surmount the vigorous resistance of the fort, defended by the flower of the inhabitants, zealous to save their own and the public treasure. A post was accordingly seized upon the higher grounds, and a battery erected with infinite labour. The hardships which the British troops sustained in this service are altogether incredible. The earth was so thin on the surface of the ground, that it was with the greatest difficulty they could cover their approaches. Meantime the artillery and stores were landing, and the fatigue of bringing them to the works was excessive. The cannon and carriages were obliged to be dragged up a bold declivity, from a rough rocky shore; and many of the men in this painful operation, and in cutting out communications through thick woods, while parched with thirst beneath a burning sun, dropped down dead. At length, every obstacle was surmounted; and the batteries, disposed along a hill on a level with the Moro, were ready to be opened, when two detachments from the garrison, each consisting of five hundred grenadiers and chosen men, supported by a body of mulattoes and armed negroes, attempted to destroy the works of the besiegers.

June 29.

The attack of the Spaniards was vigorous; but they were repelled with the loss of above two hundred men. This advantage encouraged the English, and the batteries were opened with good effect. At the same time four ships of the line were ordered to lie as near as possible to the north east side of the Moro, with an intention to dismount the enemy's guns, and to beat down the wall of the castle. A dreadful cannonading ensued, which was kept up for seven hours, with equal steadiness on both sides; but the elevated situation of the castle gave it vast advantages over the ship, which were so much damaged in their hulls, masts, and rigging, that they were obliged to be towed off. Never however was a desperate service performed with more courage or coolness, than both officers and men discovered on this occasion, and though it failed of the desired effect, yet by diverting the enemy's fire from the land side, the general obtained a decisive superiority in the number of guns.

July 1.

This circumstance, it was hoped, would put a speedy period to the toils of the besiegers; but an unforeseen accident soon deprived them of that prospect. The enemy having found means to replace their guns, the English were obliged to play their artillery in so furious a manner, that their grand battery unfortunately took fire, and all endeavours to stop it proved ineffectual. The labour of six hundred men for seventeen days was consumed in a few hours. This accident was peculiarly discouraging, at a time when the hardships of the siege, and the diseases peculiar to the climate, had rendered two thirds of the army unfit for service. The condition of the seamen was very little better; yet both officers and soldiers applied themselves with as much ardour to restore the works, as if the siege had been just begun. Unhappily those again took fire, to the in-

July 3.

pressible grief of the besiegers, who had nothing now to trust to for success but the arrival of the reinforcements from North America; for whatever losses the Spaniards sustained in the day time were replaced in the night, by reason of the communication which was still kept open between the castle and the town. The spirit of the English, however, did not fail them. Animated by that active and persevering courage, which so remarkably distinguishes the British troops, they laboured with as much alacrity as if success had been within their reach; and though obliged to work entirely above ground, sheltered only by bags of sand or bales of cotton, instead of wool-packs, they replaced all their batteries, and renewed their fire so briskly, that they were soon in possession of the covered way, before the right bastion made a lodgment, and continued their operations so successfully, that the place was almost taken by surprise.

July 13.

This circumstance deserves to be particularly noticed. The miners being advanced about eighteen feet under the right bastion, a serjeant and twelve men were ordered, between dawn and sun-rising, to observe the enemy's works, and if possible the state of the garrison. By the assistance of ladders, which had been planted the evening before (by two engineers, who had retired on supposing themselves discovered) they got over the ditch, and up to the top of the parapet; where some Spaniards lying close on their faces, sprang up, ran into the rampart, and gave the alarm. The serjeant immediately returned, but was sent back to fulfill his orders more perfectly. Meantime the alarm-bell rung in the Moro. All the drums in the city beat the call to arms, and day began faintly to break from the east. Convinced that a last effort was now necessary, fifteen hundred men from the town made a sally in three parties, in order to relieve the castle, by destroying the works of the besiegers, or beating off the assailants, in case of the last extremity. But they were repulsed with the loss of four hundred men, and the English renewed their operations with fresh vigour.

July 22.

As a farther encouragement to the besiegers, brigadier Burton arrived with the first division of the troops from North America. By this time the miners had reached the foot of the wall; and although the fort still held out, no attempt had been made from the town to save it, since the repulse of the grand sally. Another experiment was now tried: a floating battery was sent out of the harbour, to fire grape shot and small arms into the ditch, where the English miners were at work; but the party appointed to cover the approaches, plied the Spaniards so briskly, that they were obliged to retire. This was the last effort of the enemy for the relief of the Moro; for by two in the afternoon that same day, a mine was sprung, which threw down part of the wall into the ditch, and left a breach thought practicable, though small, and the troops were ordered to storm it. The Spanish garrison was still considerable, and the brave defence they had made left the besiegers no room to doubt of the valour and resolution of their commanders; but danger itself was only a stimulus to troops who had so near a prospect of terminating their dreadful toils. They prepared themselves for the assault with the greatest alacrity: and mounting the breach, under the

July 27.

July 30.

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A. D. 1762.

command of major-general Keppel, entered the fort with so much intrepidity and order, as entirely disconcerted the Spaniards. Four hundred of them were cut in pieces, or perished in attempting to make their escape by water to the city, and four hundred threw down their arms, and received quarter. The marquis de Gonzales, who was second in command, bravely fell in endeavouring to stop the shameful flight of his countrymen; and Don Lewis de Velasco, the governor, whose gallant resistance will long be remembered, died like a patriot hero, in defending the ensign of Spain, which no entreaties could induce him to resign.

No sooner did the Spaniards in the town and Puntal castle, perceive the English to be in possession of the Moro, than they directed all their fire against that place. Meanwhile the British troops were employed in erecting batteries upon an eminence which commanded the city; and the arrival of the second reinforcement from North America, encouraged them to proceed with ardour. Every obstacle was surmounted; the batteries were completed; and sixty pieces of cannon were ready to play upon the town, when lord Albemarle, willing to prevent an unnecessary carnage, sent his aid de camp with a flag of truce to summon the governor to surrender, and to lay before him the unavoidable ruin that was ready to fall upon the place. The governor detained the messenger for some hours, but without suffering him to approach the works, and at last declared, that he was resolved to hold out to the last extremity. Next morning the batteries were opened with such effect, both against the town and fort, that flags of truce appeared in every quarter of the Havana soon after noon, and a deputy was sent to the camp of the besiegers, in order to settle the terms of capitulation. A cessation of hostilities now took place, and the city of Havana, the Puntal castle, and the fleet in the harbour, were surrendered to his Britannic majesty, on the 14th of August, 1762. Without violating the articles of capitulation, which secured to the inhabitants their private property, the conquerors found a booty computed at two millions of pounds sterling in silver and valuable merchandise, besides arms, artillery, and military stores.

The loss of the important city of Havana, and eventually of the whole island of Cuba, the centre of the wealth and power of Spain in the New World, made peace as necessary to the court of Madrid, as it could possibly be to that of Versailles, whose distresses were now arrived at their greatest extremity. The English ministry, at this time, consented to treat of peace; but it seemed a matter of no small difficulty to settle the terms. The successes of Great Britain had been astonishing in North America and the West Indies. She could not however hope to retain all the conquests she had made. It was therefore necessary that she should make a choice; and it was by many supposed, that she would give up part of her conquests on the continent, and reserve to herself the valuable sugar-islands. This system would have been attended with a very considerable increase of her customs, which the exhausted state of her finances seemed to require: but she preferred future security to present advantage; and scorning the jealousies of those, who insinuated that the French colony of Canada was neces-

rary to keep New England in a more close dependence on the mother country, she relinquished her most valuable acquisitions in the West Indies, in order to retain the possession of a boundless empire in North America. We shall afterwards have occasion to enter more fully into the merits of that peace: at present it will be sufficient to observe, that Cuba, Martinico, and Guadeloupe were restored, and that France ceded to England the islands of St. Vincent, Tobago, Dominica, Granada, and the Granadines, which now compose part of the British West Indies.

Thus England lost an opportunity, which may never perhaps return, of seizing all the revenues, and becoming master of all the wealth of the New World. Mexico was in her power, as the English were in possession of the gulph that opens the way to it: this valuable continent must, therefore, soon have become their property. It might have been allured, either by offers of an easier government, or by the flattering hopes of liberty: the Spaniards might have been induced to shake off the yoke of the mother-country, which took up arms to oppress its colonies, rather than to protect them; or the Indians might have been tempted to break the chains which enslaved them to an arbitrary sway. The whole face of America might perhaps have been entirely changed; and England, more free and more equitable than other monarchical powers, must have benefited itself at the same time that it rescued the human race from the oppressions they suffered in the New World.

C H A P. II.

An Account of the Slave Trade, with such Particulars relative to the original State of the Negroes as are necessary to render that Account intelligible; some Reflections on the Advantages and Disadvantages of introducing such a Race of Men into the New World, as well as of employing them in the Cultivation of the Ground; a View of their wretched Condition there, and an Attempt at the Character of their impious Masters.

LET us now consider, by what means the nations, who have divided among them the great archipelago of America, have been able to raise it to that degree of opulence, which has made it the object of so many wars and negotiations.

Gold and silver were originally looked upon as the only valuable productions, which Europe could derive from the New World; but when it was found that her precious metals had either never existed in many of those countries, or were no longer procured in sufficient quantities to repay the expense of working the mines, certain speculative men superior to vulgar prejudices, conjectured that a soil and climate, so totally different from ours, might either furnish us with commodities to which we were strangers, or which we were obliged to purchase at an exorbitant price. They accordingly applied themselves,

BOOK III. selves, especially in the West Indies, to these foreign cultures. They met however, at first, with some obstacles, apparently insurmountable, in the execution of this plan. The natives were either entirely destroyed, or the weakness of their constitutions, their habit of indolence, and their invincible aversion against labour, rendered them very unfit instruments for executing the designs of their oppressors. They sunk under their new toils, or fell martyrs to their love of freedom; and Europeans, born in a temperate climate, could not support the labours of agriculture under a burning and unwholesome sky. Avarice, ever fruitful in expedients, devised the plan of procuring cultivators from Africa, a country where the detestable and inhuman custom of selling its inhabitants hath at all times prevailed. We have seen this experiment very early, and successfully attempted in Hispaniola*; and as soon as the other European nations had established colonies in the American archipelago, they followed the example of the Spaniards.

All the inhabitants of the western coast of Africa, from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Cape of Good Hope, are black. The cause of this singularity hath given rise to a variety of systems. Some have absurdly supposed, that the negroes being the descendants of Cain, have had this mark of infamy stamped upon them, as a punishment for the fratricide of their ancestor: if it were so, it must indeed be allowed, that his posterity have made a severe atonement for his crime; and that the descendants of the peaceful Abel, have thoroughly avenged the blood of their innocent father. Waving, however, the discussion of such wild fancies, begot by ignorance upon superstition, let us inquire whether it is possible that the negroes should derive their colour from the climate they inhabit. Buffon and other eminent naturalists are of this opinion. "There are no negroes, say they, but in the hottest countries. Their colour becomes darker, the nearer they approach to the equator, and lighter towards the extremities of the torrid zone. The whole human race, except in regions of excessive rigour, contract whiteness from their vicinity to the snow, and brownness from their exposure to the sun. Various shades may be observed from white to black, and from black to white, marked out as it were by the parallel degrees, which cut the earth from the equator to the poles." It is somewhat remarkable, however, that nature, which has lavished the brightest and most beautiful colours on the skin and plumage of animals, on vegetables and metals, should, properly speaking, have left man without colour, since black and white are nothing but the beginning and the absence of all colour.

But whatever may be the origin, and radical cause, of that diversity of complexion observable in the human species, it is agreed that among anatomists, that this complexion is immediately owing to a glutinous substance which is lodged between the cuticle and the skin. That substance is blackish in negroes, brown in olive-coloured or swarthy people, white in Europeans, and diversified with reddish spots in people who have extremely light or red hair. Anatomy hath

* Book I. chap. iii. p. 42.

further,

further discovered, that in negroes the substance of the brain is blackish, and their blood is of a much deeper red than that of white people. Their skin is always hotter, and their pulse quicker. The sweat of the negro diffuses a strong and disagreeable smell; because it is impregnated with that thick and rancid oil, which hath been long lodged, and slowly oozes out between the cuticle and the skin. This oil is so palpable, that one may distinguish in it with a microscope a sediment formed in little blackish globules. Hence the perspiration of a negro, when copious, tinges the linen cloth which wipes it off.

Anatomy hath even discovered the origin of the blackness of negroes in the principles of generation. Nothing more, it should seem, can be necessary to prove, that negroes are a particular species of men; for if any thing discriminates the species, or the classes in each species, it is certainly the difference of semen. The colour of the negroes is therefore falsely supposed to be owing to the climate, as other circumstances conspire to demonstrate. The eastern coast of Africa, under the same parallels with Guinea, produces no negroes: white people are even found there; nor has the heat of the sun ever produced any blacks in America.

Though it should be allowed, that the western coast of Africa is the hottest region on the face of the globe, the only inference to be deduced from this would be, That there are climates proper only for certain races of men, or certain races adapted to particular climates; but not that the difference of climate would change the same race or species from white to black. The sun has not the power of altering the germina of reproduction. White people never become black in Africa, nor negroes white in America or in Europe. There have been four complete generations of negroes in Pennsylvania, without any visible change of colour: they continue jet black as originally. Those who ascribe all to the sun, ought to consider how little probable it is, that the colour which it impresses on the parents should be communicated to their infant offspring, who never saw the sun. The Hottentots are continually at work, and have been for ages, to darken their complexion; but that operation has no effect on their children. From the action of the sun it is possible to explain, why a negro, like an European is born with a ruddy skin, which turns jet black the eighth or ninth day*?

The climate inhabited by the negroes exhibits no palpable variations, except such as are occasioned by sands or marshes. The almost insupportable heat of their days is succeeded by very cool and refreshing nights; with this difference only, that they are less cool in the rainy seasons than in the times of drought. The dew, less profuse under a cloudy sky than under a serene horizon, is undoubtedly the cause of this singularity. From the frontiers of Morocco, as far as the river Senegal, the land is entirely barren. Some Arabs, the descendants of those who conquered Barbary, and some Moors, the ancient inhabitants of

* See on this subject Lord Kaim's Sketches on Man, book I. sketch i. and Raynal's Hist. Pailos. &c. liv. xi.

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the country, lead a miserable wandering life amid those burning and dry sands, which are finally lost in the solitudes of Saharah. The banks of the Niger, Gambia, Sierra Leona, and those of some less considerable streams, which flow in the long space that intervenes between these principal rivers, exhibit proofs of the greatest fertility. Maize grows there without much cultivation, as well as all the fruits that are natural to America, and in the care of flocks consists almost the sole employment of the natives.

The inhabitants of Cape Monte, environed on every side by sands, form a nation entirely distinct from the rest of Africa. In the rice of their marshes consists all their nourishment, and their only riches. They sell to the Europeans a small quantity of this grain, for which they receive in exchange brandy and hardware. From Cape Palmas to the river Volta, the negroes are traders and husbandmen. They are husbandmen, because their land, though stony, abundantly requites the necessary labour and expence of clearing it: they are traders, because they have behind them nations which furnish them with gold, copper, ivory, and slaves; and because nothing obstructs a continued communication between the people of the country and those on the coast. Between the river Volta and that of Calbary, the coast is flat, fertile, populous, and cultivated. The country which extends from Calbary to Gabon is very different: almost totally covered with thick forests, it produces little fruit, no corn, and may be said rather to be inhabited by beasts than men. Though the rains there are very frequent and copious, as they must be under the equator, the soil is so sandy, that immediately after the heaviest shower, there remains little or no appearance of moisture.

To the south of the line, as far as Zara, the coast presents an agreeable prospect. Low at its beginning, it gradually rises, and exhibits a scene of cultivated fields, intermixed with woods always verdant, and of meadows covered with palm-trees. From Zara to Coanza, and yet farther, the coast is in general high and craggy. In the interior parts of this country is a celebrated plain, the soil of which is composed of a large, thick, and fertile sand. But a little beyond Coanza a barren region intervenes, of about two hundred leagues in extent, which is terminated by the country of the Hottentots. In this long space there are no inhabitants except the Cimbebes, with whom no intercourse is kept up.

The varieties observable on the shores of the west of Africa, do not prevent them from enjoying a very extraordinary and perhaps a singular advantage. On this immense coast, those stupendous rocks, so alarming to the navigator, are no where seen. The sea is universally calm, the wind regular, and the anchorage secure. Several excellent harbours are there to be met with, in which the mariner may easily pursue unmolested, the labours which the refitting of ships require, after a voyage so long. During six months of the year, from April to November, the winds and currents have nearly the same direction. To the south of the line, the south-east wind predominates, and the direction of the currents

currents is toward the north; but to the north of the line, the east wind prevails, and the direction of the currents is toward the north-east. During the six other months, storms by intervals change the direction of the wind, but it no longer blows with the same violence. The spring of the air seems to be relaxed.

Vague conjectures only can be formed with regard to every thing that respects the interior parts of Africa; but it is a fact sufficiently authenticated, that, throughout the whole extent of the coast, the government is arbitrary. Whether the sovereign ascends the throne by right of birth, or by election, he is equally despotic: the people have no other law but his will. But what may perhaps seem more extraordinary to the inhabitants of Europe is, that, in Africa, the countries which are least liable to revolutions, are those that have preserved the right of electing their chiefs. The choice commonly falls upon some old man, whose wisdom is generally known. Every freeman has a right to vote; and there are even some tribes among whom the women enjoy this privilege.

The hereditary kingdoms of Benin and Whidah excepted, such is the manner in which that little groupe of states to the north of the line is formed. To the south of the equinoctial we meet with Mayumba and Cilingo, where the chiefs are admitted among the ministers of religion; and with the empires of Loango and Congo, where the crown is perpetual in the male line, by the female side; that is, the eldest son of the king's eldest sister inherits the throne, when it becomes vacant *. These people, with good reason believe, that a child is much more certainly the son of his mother, than of the man to whom she is married: they trust rather to the act of delivery, which they see, than to that of conception, of which they know nothing.

The negroes live in a total ignorance of that science so much valued among us, under the name of politics. They do not, however, neglect to observe some of its formalities. The custom of sending embassies is familiar to them; whether to solicit aid against a powerful enemy, to request a mediator in their differences, or to congratulate others upon their successes—on the birth of a child, or the falling of a shower after a great drought. Their system of war is as little complicated as that of policy. None of those nations retain any troops in pay. Every freeman is by condition a soldier. All take up arms to guard their frontiers, or to make incursions in quest of booty. The officers are chosen by the soldiers, and the election is confirmed by the prince. As they have no magazines, their hostilities are but of short duration: it would prove a great misfortune to them, if they were obliged to keep the field for fifteen days together. The day after the battle, each party redeems its respective prisoners. They are exchanged for merchandize or for slaves. No portion of the territory is ever ceded: the whole belongs to the community, whose chief fixes the extent which each person is to cultivate, in order to reap the fruits of it.

* La Croix, vol. III.

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Nor is this manner of terminating differences confined merely to the smaller states, whose chiefs are too prudent to aspire after enlarging their dominions, and too far advanced in years not to be fond of peace. Great empires are obliged to conform to these principles with neighbours much weaker than themselves. The sovereign has never any standing army; and though he disposes at pleasure of the lives of the governors of his provinces, he prescribes them no rules of administration. These are petty princes; who, from fear of being suspected of ambition, and punished with death, live in concord with the elective governments which surround them: and this unanimity between the more considerable powers and the smaller states, is preserved as much by the great authority which the prince hath over his subjects, as by the impossibility of exerting it as he pleases. He can only strike a single blow, or cause a single head to be struck off. His power against individuals is unlimited, but he can do very little against the collective body; because, in such an attempt, he would find no person to execute his orders.

Another reason which prevents the small states from being enslaved by the great ones is, that the negroes annex no idea of glory to the achievement of conquests. The only person who appears to have been animated by this destructive spirit was a slave-broker, who from his infancy had frequented the European vessels, and who in his riper years had made a voyage to Portugal. Every thing he saw and heard fired his imagination, and taught him that a great name was frequently acquired by being the author of great calamities. On his return to his native country, he felt himself much humbled in his own eyes at being obliged to obey people less enlightened than himself. His intrigues raised him to the dignity of chief of the Achonis, and he prevailed on them to take up arms against their neighbours. Nothing was able to oppose his valour; so that his dominion extended over an hundred leagues of coast, of which Anamaboa was the center. At his death no one dared to succeed him in his usurped authority; all the supports of which falling to pieces, every thing returned to its former situation*.

The Christian and Mahometan religions seem to have taken possession of the two extremities of that part of the west of Africa, which is frequented by the Europeans. The mussulmen of Barbary carried their theological system to the people of the Cape de Verd islands, who have extended it still farther. But those tenets have every where undergone an alteration in proportion to their distance from their source; insomuch that each kingdom, each village, and frequently each family, maintains a different system. Excepting circumcision, which is universal, it would scarce be imagined that these people professed the same worship. This religion does not penetrate beyond Cape Monte. What the Arabs had done to the north of the line for the Koran, the Portuguese afterwards did to the south of the equator for the gospel. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, they established it from the country of Benguela to Zara. A mode of worship, which offered sure and easy means for the expiation of

* Bosman, Des Marchais.

all crimes, was perfectly agreeable to the taste of nations, among whom the greatest enormities were common, and whose religion afforded them no such comfortable prospect. If Christianity was afterwards proscribed in several states, it was owing to the practices of those who propagated it, not any dislike to the religion itself. It is now totally disguised even in the countries where it has been tolerated. A few trifling ceremonies are the only remains of it. The coasts in the center have preserved some local superstitions, which must be very ancient. They consist in the worship of that innumerable multitude of divinities or *fetiches**, which every person makes after his own fancy, and for his own use. The negroes not only believe these material substances endowed with intelligence, and the power of doing them good or evil, but also that the priest or *feticher*, being of their council, is privy to all that those divinities know, and thence acquainted with the most secret thoughts and hidden actions of men †. Their veneration for their priests, as may be imagined, therefore approaches to adoration; and the commission of murder is a smaller crime than the eating of any kind of prohibited food, in disobedience to their commands. ‡.

The different religions spread over the western coast of Africa, have not however changed the manner of living. The influence of climate is there so predominant, that opinions have but little effect upon manners. The houses are all built with the branches of the palm-tree, most commonly of earth, and covered with straw, osiers, or reeds. The furniture consists solely of baskets, earthen pots, mats, which serves as beds for the inhabitants, and calabashes, of which all their dishes and plates are made. A girdle round their loins is their only apparel; they live on yams, fish, fruit, rice, or on bread made of maize; their drink is the wine of the palm-tree; arts are almost unknown among them; and all their labours are confined to certain rustic employments. Scarce one hundredth part of their country is cultivated, and that in a very wretched manner, either by poor people or by slaves.

There is a greater variety observable in the character of the Africans than in their wants. On the banks of the Niger, the woman are generally handsome, if beauty consists in symmetry of parts, not in colour. Modest, affable, and faithful, an air of innocence appears in their looks, and the softness of their voice is an indication of their bashfulness. The men are of a proper size; their skin is as black as ebony; their features are pleasing, and their countenances expressive. The habit of taming horses and hunting wild beasts gives them an air of dignity. They do not easily put up with an affront; but the example of those animals which they have reared, inspires them with boundless gratitude to a master who treats them with indulgence. It is impossible to find servants more attentive, more sober, or who have stronger attachments:

* The word *fetiches*, in a strict sense, signifies whatever represents their divinities; but the idea of the negroes concerning their *dii minores*, their lesser gods, is not well explained by travellers, or understood even by the most sensible among themselves.

† Bosman, *epist.* x.

‡ *Id. ibid.*

but they do not make good husbandmen ; because their body is not habituated to bend toward the ground, in order to clear it.

Towards the east the complexion of the Africans degenerates. The people in those latitudes are robust, but short. They have an air of strength, which is denoted by firm muscles ; their faces are broad, and their features void of expression ; and the figures impressed on their foreheads and on their cheeks increase their natural deformity. An ungrateful soil, which is not improvable by culture, has forced them to have recourse to fishing ; though the sea, on which they dare scarce venture, by reason of a bar that runs along the coast, seems to divert them from such a mode of life. Thus repulsed as it were by the elements, they have sought relief among adjacent nations, more favoured by nature, from whom they procure a subsistence by selling them salt. The wives of these mercantile negroes share all their labours except that of fishing. These women have neither the gentleness, modesty, discretion, nor beauty of those of the Niger, and they appear to have less sensibility. In comparing the two nations, it might be imagined, that the one were the lowest class of a people considerably advanced in civilization, and that the other had enjoyed the advantages of a superior education. Their language is a strong indication of their character. The accents of the people on the Niger have an extreme sweetness, while those farther east are harsh and dry, like the soil they inhabit. Their vivacity, even in pleasure, resembles the furious transports of anger.

Beyond the river Volta, in Benin and the other countries known by the general name of the Gold Coast, the people have a smooth skin, and a dark black colour ; their teeth are beautiful ; they are of a middling stature, but well shaped, and have a bashful countenance. Their faces, though tolerably agreeable, would be much more pleasing, if the women were not accustomed to scar them, and the men to burn their foreheads. This people have a disposition to cheerfulness not observable among the neighbouring nations ; they are inclined to labour ; have a ready conception, a solid judgment, principles of equity seldom altered by circumstances, and a great facility of adopting themselves to foreign manners.

The people situated between Zara and the line, have all a great resemblance to each other. They are well made, though less robust than the inhabitants of the countries on the other side of the equator ; and though there are some marks on their faces, they are free from those shocking scars, common among their northern neighbours. Their food is simple, and their life frugal. They love ease, and are averse from labour. Their feasts are accompanied with military sports, which revive the idea of our ancient tournaments ; with this difference, that in Europe those exercises constituted the amusements of warlike nations, whereas in Africa they are the recreations of a timid people. The women are not admitted to these public diversions. Assembled together in certain houses appropriated for their use, they spend the day in private, and no man is ever admitted into their society. The pride of rank is the strongest passion of this people, who are naturally inoffensive. A certain degree of ceremony obtains

both

both at the court of princes, and in private life. On the most trivial occurrences, they hasten to their friends, either to congratulate them, or to condole with them. A marriage occasions visiting for several months, and the funeral obsequies of a person of distinction continue sometimes a whole year. Those who are connected, in any degree, with the deceased, carry his remains through several provinces. The crowd gathers as they proceed, and no person departs till the corpse is deposited in the tomb, with all the demonstrations of the deepest sorrow *

Such, according to the most authentic testimonies, are the people whom the Europeans have destined to the tasks of beasts of burden, in cultivating their lands in the American archipelago, and on several parts of the continent. The property which some men have acquired over others in that part of Africa called Guinea, is of very high antiquity. It is generally established there, some small districts excepted, where liberty hath as it were retired, and is still maintained. No proprietor, however, has a right to sell a slave who becomes such merely in consequence of the servile state of his parents. He can only dispose of those slaves whom he acquires; whether by war, in which every prisoner is a slave unless exchanged; as a compensation for some injury, or as an expression of benefits received. This law, which seems to have been made in favour of those who are born in a state of servitude, in order to indulge them with the enjoyment of their country and kindred, is become ineffectual since the Europeans have exposed their tempting luxuries on the coasts of Africa. It is every day eluded by concerted quarrels, which two proprietors mutually dissemble, in order to be reciprocally condemned, each in his turn, to a fine, that is paid in persons born in servitude, or slaves by birth, the transferring of whom is allowed by the same law. They may afterwards be sold.

Corruption, on these coasts, contrary to its ordinary progress, hath advanced from private persons to princes. The desire of procuring slaves has given frequent occasion to wars; and a custom hath been established of punishing with slavery, not only such citizens as have attempted the lives and properties of others, but those also who are incapable of paying their debts, and those who have violated conjugal faith. In a word, the loss of liberty, which was originally adjudged only for the greatest crimes, has been extended to the most trivial offences. Prohibitions even of things indifferent have been constantly multiplied, in order to increase the revenues arising from the fines, by increasing the number of offences and of slaves. Injustice hath known no bounds. At a great distance from the coast, there are chiefs who give orders for carrying off persons of all ages and sexes found in the villages of certain districts. The children are thrown into sacks, and the men and women are gagged to stifle their cries. If the ravagers happen to be seized by superior force, they are conducted before the prince, who always disavows the commission he had given; and under pretence

* Bosman. Barbot. Desmarchais. Hist. Gen. des Voyages, tom. VI.

of doing justice, instantly sells his agents to the ships they were to furnish with slaves*.

Notwithstanding these infamous practices, the people of the coasts have found it impossible to supply the growing demands of the merchants. They have experienced what every nation must, that can trade only with its nominal stock. Slaves are to the commerce of the Europeans in Africa, what gold is in the commerce we carry on in the New World. The heads of the negroes represent the stock of the states of Guinea. Every day this stock is carried off, and nothing is left them but articles of consumption. Their capital gradually vanishes; because it cannot be renewed in proportion to the speedy consumptions. The trade for blacks would therefore have been long since entirely lost, if the inhabitants of the coasts had not imported their luxury to the people of the inland countries, from whom they now draw the greater part of the slaves that are purchased by Europeans. In the space of fifty years this circumstance has raised the price of negroes to almost four times their former value. The reason is obvious. The slaves are chiefly paid for in East India commodities, which have doubled their value in Europe: a double quantity of these commodities must be given in Africa; hence our American colonies, where the transactions of the slave trade are ultimately concluded, are obliged to support these several augmentations, and consequently to pay four times the price which they formerly did for their negroes.

The distant African proprietor who sells his slave, receives however a less quantity of merchandise, than the person received fifty years ago, who sold his slave in the neighbourhood of the coast. The profits intercepted by passing through different hands, the expenses of transport, the imposts, sometimes of three per cent. that must be paid to those princes through whose territories they pass, sink the difference between the original sum which the proprietor receives and that which the European trader pays. These expenses continually increase, by reason of the great distance of the places where there are yet slaves to be sold. The more remote the place of the first sale is, the greater must be the expenses attending the journey; and they will become such, that of the sum which the European merchant can afford to pay, so little will remain to the first seller, that he will chuse rather to keep his slave, than accept of such an equivalent. All trade of this kind will then be at an end. In order to support it as long as possible, our traders must therefore pay an exorbitant price, and sell in proportion to the colonies; which on their part, not being able to dispose of their produce but at a very advanced price, will no longer find a consumption for it. But till that time arrives, which is perhaps not so distant as those interested imagine, they will, without the least remorse, make the lives and labours of the negroes subservient to their avarice: they will find navigators who will pilot the ocean, and run every other hazard, in order to purchase them; and these will meet with tyrants, who will sell them.

* Ibid.

Slave-merchants collect themselves into companies, and forming a species of caravans, conduct several files of thirty or forty slaves, all laden with the water and corn necessary to their subsistence, in those barren deserts through which they must pass. The manner of securing them, without much incommoding their journey, is ingeniously contrived. A fork of wood, from eight to nine feet long, is put round the neck of each slave. A pin of iron rivetted secures the fork at the back in such a manner that the head cannot disengage itself. The handle of the fork, the wood of which is very heavy, falls before, and so embarrasses the person who is tied to it, that though he has his arms and legs at liberty, he can neither walk nor lift up the fork. When they get ready for their march, they range the slaves on the same line, and support and tie the extremity of each fork on the shoulder of the foremost slave, and proceed in this manner from one to another till they come to the first, the extremity of whose fork is carried by one of the guides. Thus they proceed; and in order that they may enjoy the refreshment of sleep without anxiety, they tie the arms of every slave to the tail of the fork which he carries. In this condition, he can neither run away nor make any attempt to recover his liberty.

All these precautions have been found indispensable; because, if a slave can but break his chain, he becomes free. The public faith, which secures to the proprietor the possession of his slave, and which at all times delivers him up to his master, is silent with regard to a slave and a trader who exercises the most despicable of all professions. Great numbers of slaves arrive on the coasts together, especially when they are brought from distant countries. This management is necessary, in order to diminish the expense, which is unavoidable, in conducting them. The intervals between one journey and another, sufficiently distant, in consequence of that system of œconomy, is often rendered greater by particular circumstances. The most usual of these are the rains, which make the rivers overflow their banks, and obstruct travelling. The season most favourable to intercourse in the interior parts of Africa is from February to September; and hence it is, that the return of the slave-merchants, produces the greatest plenty in this traffic from September to March*.

The slave-trade is carried on by the Europeans both to the north and the south of the line. The first coast, known by the name of Angola, hath but three ports which are equally free to all nations. These are Cabenda, Loango, and Malemba. There are other two, of which the Portuguese are the sole masters; St. Paul de Loando, and St. Philip de Benguela. This coast nearly supplies one third of the negroes that are carried to the West Indies, who are neither the most intelligent, the most industrious, nor the most robust. The second coast, known by the general name of the Gold Coast, abounds more in harbours, but they are not equally favourable to commerce. The restraint occasioned by the forts which the Europeans have there erected, in different places, drives away the dealers in slaves: they are therefore to be met with in greater plenty at Anamaboa and Calbary, where commerce is entirely free.

* Snelgrave. Bosman. Atkins.

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In the year 1768, there were exported out of Africa an hundred and four thousand, one hundred slaves. The English bought up fifty-three thousand, one hundred of them, for their West India islands; the English colonies on the continent, six thousand three hundred; the French, twenty-three thousand five hundred; the Dutch, eleven thousand three hundred; the Portuguese, eight thousand seven hundred; and the Danes, one thousand two hundred*. It must not however be supposed, that America regularly receives the same number of negroes. Independent of the diminution in the number of voyages to Guinea during the war, the arrangements of last peace have occasioned new lands to be cultivated, which required extraordinary supplies: the number of men, of which the African coasts are annually deprived, may therefore be reduced to sixty thousand. Granting that each of these slaves costs on the spot fifteen pounds, those barbarous regions receive every year about a million sterling for so horrid a sacrifice.

The Portuguese excepted, who, as already observed†, make great part of their exchanges in tobacco, all nations pay for their slaves with the same commodities. These are swords, muskets, gun-powder, iron, brandy, hardware, woollen stuffs, and East India cottons, or those which are wrought in Europe, and coloured in the same manner. This trade is clogged with several taxes. The greatest of these is the fee that must be given to the factor, who always meditates between the vender and the purchaser. Of him it is necessary to make a friend; more especially since the competition between the purchasers has increased, and the want of slaves been more sensibly felt, in consequence of the diminution of their number as well as the growing demands. Another tax, which though asked under the name of present, is no less an extorted tribute; namely, that which must be paid to the prince and his chief officers for the liberty of trading. The sum is in proportion to the size of the vessel, and may be computed at three per cent.

The European nations have been of opinion, that it was conducive to the advantage of their commerce to form settlements on the coast of Africa. The Portuguese, who first traversed those boundless regions, left every where the marks of their ambition, rather than of their sagacity. The weak and numerous colonies which they poured in soon forgot a country which had itself forgotten them; and in process of time, there remained of these great conquests nothing but that vast space which extends from Zara to Cape Negro, whence Brazil still procures its slaves. They have also preserved some isles of little consequence. Those which are situated at the west end of Cape de Verd produce salt, feed cattle, and serve as a place of refreshment for vessels going to the East Indies. Prince's island and St. Thomas, which are at the entrance of the Gulph of Gabon, supply with fresh provisions such navigators as sail from the Gold Coast to America. They are otherwise of no importance in the commercial world.

* Raynal, liv. xi.

† Book II. chap. iv. p. 494.

Though Portugal, even in the earliest times derived but very moderate advantages from its settlements on the coast of Africa, it was yet so jealous of the sovereignty which it exercised there, in virtue of its discoveries, that it thought no other nation had a right to approach those shores. The English, who first ventured to question the right of these pretensions, sustained about the middle of the sixteenth century, the affront of having their vessels seized. A national war ensued, and the superiority of arms put a final period to this tyranny. In a course of years, the exclusive companies of England, which had embarked in this trade, successively formed factories without number, of which that of Cape Corse, on the Gold Coast, and that of James, situated in an island at the mouth of the river Gambia, were for a considerable time the principal, and the most beneficial. Though many of them had been abandoned, there remained sixteen, when the parliament, roused by the complaints of the trading part of the nation, determined to put a stop to this monopoly. The government accordingly purchased from the proprietors all their fortified places, and laid the trade open in 1752.

The English had almost entirely engrossed the African trade, when the Dutch in 1637, undertook to share it with them. The war which they were carrying on against Spain, to which Portugal was then subject, authorized them to attack the Portuguese settlements in Guinea; and they made themselves masters of these in a very short time. The treaty in 1641, secured the property of them to the republic. The Dutch, pretending to enter into all the rights of the first possessor, now attempted to exclude the English from those latitudes. Nor did they cease to molest the trade of their rivals till the peace of Breda, in 1667. Of all the Dutch conquests that of fort Mina, on the Gold Coast, was found the most important. It had been built in 1452, by the Portuguese, who had enriched its territory by planting sugar-canes, maize, and different kinds of excellent fruits. They had also supplied it with a number of useful animals, imported thither from Europe; and they drew from it a considerable quantity of gold, besides some slaves. This settlement did not decline in the hands of the Dutch, who made it the centre of all the factories they had acquired, and of all the trade they carried on with Africa.

The prosperity of the Dutch, in this part of the world, was at its height, when they were attacked by Lewis XIV. This prince, who aspired at universal monarchy, seized an opportunity offered him by the war of 1672, of extending the terror of his arms even to the heart of Africa. He took from the Dutch the forts of Arguin and Portendic, which were at that time the general market for gums. His subjects afterwards established on the coast several posts, which they were obliged to abandon, either because they were not judiciously chosen, or because a sufficient force was wanting to defend them; and since the misfortunes of last war hath obliged France to give up Senegal to England, she hath nothing remaining in Africa but a factory at Whidah, and the island of Goree, where there neither is nor ever will be any trade.

If we except the Portuguese, all the European nations originally subjected their African trade to exclusive charters. The companies in possession of this monopoly.

BOOK III. monopoly (the disadvantage of which all governments have at last felt and put a stop to) fortified their factories, both in order to drive away strangers, and to oblige the natives to sell to none but themselves. When the districts in which these forts were erected had no more slaves to deliver, trade languished, because the people in the interior countries rather chose to convey their slaves to free ports, where they might find a greater number of purchasers, and have the benefit of competition. Hence the factories, which were of so much utility when the coast was populous, are now less valuable, as the factors themselves are obliged to make long journies, in order to complete the number of slaves required. The principal advantage of these establishments was lost, when the object of their commerce was exhausted in the neighbouring country.

The difficulty of procuring slaves naturally points out the necessity of employing small ships for carrying them off. At a time when a small territory adjacent to the coast, furnished in a fortnight, or three weeks, a whole cargo, it was prudent to employ large vessels, because there was a possibility of understanding, looking after, and encouraging the slaves, who all spoke the same language: but at present, when each ship can scarce procure sixty or eighty slaves a month, brought from the distance of two or three hundred leagues; exhausted by the fatigues of a long journey; obliged to remain on board the vessels to which they belong five or six months, in sight of their country; having all different idioms; uncertain of the destiny that awaits them, and struck with the prepossession that the Europeans eat them, and drink their blood, which they actually do, though not in a literal sense—their extreme uneasiness alone destroy them, or occasions disorders that become contagious, by reason of the impossibility of separating the sick from the healthy. A small ship, which can carry two or three hundred negroes, avoids by means of the short stay it makes on the coast, half the accidents and losses to which a ship capable of holding five or six hundred slaves is exposed. The English have therefore wisely, of late, adopted the custom, which it were to be wished were more general, of sending vessels only of an hundred and twenty, or an hundred and thirty tons burden, to the coasts which extend from Senegal to the river Volta, and not exceeding two hundred tons, for those coasts where they make their principal cargoes. The French are the only people who obstinately adhere to the ancient practice.

Though all the nations concerned in the African trade are equally interested in preserving the slaves in their passage, they do not all attend to it with the same care. They all feed them with beans, mixed with a small quantity of rice; but they differ in their manner of treating them in other respects. The English, Dutch, and Danes, keep them constantly in irons, and frequently hand-cuff the women. The small number of hands they have on board their ships obliges them to exercise this severity. The French, who have a more numerous crew, allow the slaves more liberty. Three or four days after setting sail, they take off their fetters. All these nations, especially the English, are too negligent in regard to the intercourse of the sailors with the female slaves. The irregularities consequent on this licence, occasion the death of three-fourths of those seamen whom

whom the Guinea voyages destroy. None but the Portuguese are secure, during their passage, against revolts, and other calamities proceeding from ill-humour. This advantage is the result of the care they take to man their vessels chiefly with negroes to whom they have given their freedom. The slaves encouraged by the conversation and condition of their countrymen, form a tolerably favourable idea of the destiny that awaits them. The quietness of their behaviour induces the Portuguese to grant the two sexes the happiness of living together; an indulgence, which if allowed in the vessels of other nations, would be productive of the most fatal consequences.

It is a generally received opinion among the Europeans in the New World, that the Africans, destitute of moral and intellectual qualities, are alike incapable of reasoning and of virtue. The following well authenticated anecdote will enable us to judge of the justness of this opinion. An English ship that traded to Guinea in 1752, was obliged to leave the surgeon behind, whose health was so low as not to permit him to go to sea. Murray (for that was the surgeon's name) lodged with a negro of the name of Cudjoc, and was in a way of recovery, when a Dutch vessel drew near the coast, and put in irons those blacks whom curiosity had drawn to the shore, and sailed off with them. The friends, and relations of the persons kidnapped incensed at so base a treachery, instantly ran to the house of Cudjoc, who stopped them at the door, and asked what they wanted. "The white man that is with you," replied they, "who should be put to death, because his brethren have carried off ours." "The Europeans," answered the generous host, "who have carried off our countrymen, are barbarians: kill them wherever you can find them; but he who is with me is a good man, he is my friend: my house is his fortress; I am his soldier, and will defend him. Before you can get at him you shall pass over my body. O my friends! what just man would ever enter my doors, if I should suffer my habitation to be stained with the blood of an innocent person?"—This discourse appeased the rage of the negroes: they returned ashamed of the design that had brought them thither; and some days after acknowledged to Murray himself, how happy they were that they had not committed a crime, which would have filled them with endless remorse.

This incident renders it probable, that the first impressions which the Africans receive in the New World, determine them either to good or bad actions. Those who fall to the share of a humane master, willingly espouse his interests. They insensibly adopt the spirit and manners of the spot where they are fixed. This attachment is sometimes exalted even to heroism. A Portuguese slave who had fled into the woods having learned that his old master had been taken up for an assassination, came into the court of justice, and declared himself guilty of the deed; let himself be put in prison in place of his master; brought false, though judicial proofs, of his pretended crime, and suffered death instead of the guilty person. Actions of a less heroic nature, though not uncommon, have touched the hearts of some planters, who would readily say with Sir William Gooch, governor of Virginia, when blamed for returning the salutation of a black, "I should be sorry to see a slave more polite than myself."

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But there are tyrants, who considering pity as a weakness, delight in making their dependants continually sensible of their humbling inferiority. They justly, however, receive their punishment in the negligence, infidelity, desertion, and suicide of the deplorable victims of their insatiable avarice. Some of these unfortunate men, especially the natives of Mina, intrepidly put an end to their lives, under the firm persuasion, that they shall immediately after death revive again in their own country, which they look upon as the finest spot on the face of the earth. A vindictive spirit furnishes others with resources still more fatal. Instructed from their infancy in the knowledge of poisons, which grow as it were under their hands, they employ them in the destruction of the cattle, the horses, the mules, the companions of their slavery, and of every thing employed in the cultivation of the lands of their oppressors. In order to remove from themselves all suspicion, they first exercise their cruelties on their wives, their children, their mistresses, and all that is dear to them. In the execution of this dreadful project, which can only be the result of despair, they have the double pleasure of delivering their species from a yoke more dreadful than death, and of leaving their imperious master in a state of misery, that is an image of their own condition. The fear of punishment does not check them. They are scarce ever known to have any kind of foresight; and they are moreover certain of concealing their crimes, being proof against the keenest tortures. By means of one of those inexplicable contradictions of the human heart, though common to all people, barbarous and civilized, the negroes though naturally cowards, give many instances of an unshaken firmness of soul. The same organization which makes them acquiesce in servitude, from the indolence of their minds and the relaxation of their fibres, inspires them with vigour and unparalleled resolution for extraordinary actions. They are cowards all their lifetime, and heroes only for an instant, in exulting over death. One of these miserable men has been known to cut his wrist off with one stroke of a hatchet, rather than purchase his liberty by submitting to the ignominious office of an executioner.

Nothing, however, can be more wretched than the condition of a negro, throughout the whole American archipelago. A narrow, unwholesome hut, without any conveniencies, serves him for a dwelling. His bed is a hurdle, fitter to put the body to torture than to yield it any repose. Some earthen plates, and a few wooden dishes are his furniture. The coarse linen which covers part of his body, neither secures him against the insupportable heats of the day, nor the dangerous dews of the night. The food with which he is supplied, namely cassada*, salt pork, salt fish, fruits, roots, and bread made of maize, is scarce sufficient to support his miserable existence. Deprived of every enjoyment, he is condemned to perpetual drudgery in a burning climate, constantly under the rod of an unfeeling master.

But though the condition of these unhappy men in the West Indies, is everywhere deplorable, it is not uniformly so. Those who have very extensive estates,

* A kind of bread formed of the palse of Manioc, an account of which shall be afterwards given.

generally give them a portion of land, to supply them with the necessaries of life. They are allowed to employ Sunday, and a part of Saturday in cultivating it. In the smaller islands, the planter himself furnishes their food, the greater part of which hath been imported by sea from other countries. Besides these differences arising from the particular state of the settlements in the American archipelago, each European nation hath a manner of treating slaves peculiar to itself. The Spaniards make them the companions of their indolence; the Portuguese the instruments of their debauchery; the Dutch the victims of their avarice; and the English, who love to live well, and are willing to permit those to enjoy a share of the benefits of nature who contribute to their support, treat their slaves, in some respects, with more indulgence than other nations. If they seldom promote intermarriages among the negroes, they at least receive with kindness those children which are the produce of less restrained connexions, and rarely exact from the fathers or mothers a degree of labour above their strength. Slaves are considered by them merely as natural productions, which ought neither to be used nor destroyed without necessity, and which proper nourishment will render more beneficial. But they never treat them with familiarity; they never smile upon them, and seldom speak to them. One would think they were afraid of letting their slaves suspect that Heaven had given them any thing in common with their masters. This arrogant superiority makes the negroes dislike the English. The French, of more pliant manners, endeavour to conciliate their affections, by a less disdainful behaviour; and these unhappy men, flattered with the honour of seeing themselves treated like rational beings, seem to forget that their master is impatient of making his fortune, that he always exacts labours from them above their strength, and frequently pinches them in food.

The religious opinions of the Europeans have also some influence on the condition of the negroes in the colonies. The protestants, who are little actuated by a desire of making proselytes, suffer them to live in Mahometism, or in that idolatry in which they were educated, under a pretence that it would be contrary to the spirit of the gospel, to keep their brethren in Christ in a state of slavery. The catholics think themselves obliged to give them some instruction, and to baptise them; but their charity extends no farther than the mere ceremony of baptism, which is wholly useless and unnecessary to men who dread not the pains of hell, to which they say, not altogether without reason, they are accustomed in this life. In a word, the miseries which the negroes experience in their slavery, render them insensible to the dread of future punishment.

The strongest proof of these hardships is, the prodigious waste of this unhappy part of the human species in the West-Indies. About one third of the negroes transported thither from Guinea dies every year. This dreadful destruction cannot be the effect of the climate, which is nearly the same as that of Africa; much less of the disorders natural to the blacks, to which, in the opinion of all observers, but very few fall a sacrifice. It must therefore originate from the manner in which these slaves are governed:—and might not an error of this kind be corrected?—The first step necessary in such a reformation would be

BOOK III. be to attend minutely to the natural and moral state of man. Those who go to purchase blacks on the coast of Africa, those who convey them to America, and more especially those who direct their labours, often think themselves obliged from their situation, and frequently too for their own safety, to oppress these wretched objects of servitude. The souls of such traders and overseers, lost to all sense of compassion, are ignorant of any motive to enforce obedience but those of fear and severity; and these they exercise with all the harshness of a temporary authority. But if the proprietors of plantations would cease to regard the care of their slaves as an occupation below them: if they would consider it as an office to which it is their duty to attend, they would soon abolish every regulation that is dictated by a spirit of cruelty. The history of all mankind would shew them, That in order to render slavery useful, it must be made easy; that force does not prevent the rebellion of the mind; that it is the interest of the master that the slave should be attached to life by all the indulgences compatible with his condition; and that the moment he ceases to consider death as an evil, no farther good is to be expected of him.

This principle of enlightened reason, derived from the sentiments of humanity, would contribute to the reformation of several abuses. Men would acknowledge the necessity of lodging, cloathing, and giving proper food to human beings, condemned to the most painful bondage that ever existed in civil society, since the infamous origin of slavery. They would be sensible of the natural impossibility, that those who reap no advantage from their own labours can have the same degree of intelligence, the same attention, the same activity, or the same strength, as the man who enjoys the produce of his industry. That political moderation, which consists in lessening labour, alleviating punishment, and rendering to man part of his rights, in order to reap with more certainty the benefit of those duties that are imposed upon him, would gradually take place. The preservation of a great number of slaves, of whom disorders occasioned by vexation and regret deprive the colonies, would be the certain consequence of so wise a regulation. Instead of rendering more grievous the yoke that oppresses them, every care should be taken to make it fit easy, and to dissipate even the idea of it, by favouring, as far as circumstances will admit, every taste that is natural to them.

One of these, is that for music, to which the organs of the negroes are extremely sensible. Their ear is so true, that in their dances, the time of a song makes them spring up, an hundred at once, beating the earth at the same instant. Enchanted as it were with the voice of a singer, or the sound of a stringed instrument, the lightest vibration of the air agitates, transports, and throws them into extacies. In their common labours, the motion of their arms or of their feet is always in cadence. At all their employments they sing, and seem always as if they were dancing. Music animates their courage, and rouses them from their indolence. The marks of this extreme sensibility to harmony are visible in all the muscles of their naked bodies.

Whenever any object or incident strikes a negro, he instantly makes it the subject of a song. In all ages this has been the origin of poetry. Three or four words, which are alternately repeated by the singer and the general chorus, sometimes constitute the whole poem. Five or six bars of music compose the whole length of the song. A circumstance which appears singular is, that the same air, though merely an unvaried repetition of the same tones, takes entire possession of the negroes, and makes them work or dance for several hours; and what is still more extraordinary, neither they, nor even the white men, are disgusted with the tedious uniformity which these repetitions might be supposed to occasion. This is owing to the warmth of expression which the negroes introduce into their songs. So strong an inclination for music might become a powerful motive to action under the direction of skilful hands. Festival games and rewards might be established for this purpose; and these, conducted with judgment, would prevent that stupidity so common among slaves, lighten their labours, and preserve them from that constant melancholy which consumes them, and shortens their days*.

After providing for the preservation of the blacks exported from Africa, the welfare of those born in the West Indies should be considered. The negroes are not averse from the propagation of their species, even in the chains of slavery; but the cruelty of their masters hath effectually prevented them from fulfilling this great end of nature. Such hard labour is in general required from negro women both before and after their pregnancy, that their offspring is either abortive, or lives but a short time after delivery. Rendered desperate by the punishments which the weakness of their condition occasions, mothers sometimes snatch their children from the cradle, in order to strangle them in their arms, and sacrifice them with an enthusiastic fury, roused by a spirit of revenge, mingled with the tenderest sentiments of compassion, that they may not become the property of their unfeeling oppressors. This barbarity, the horror of which must be entirely imputed to the Europeans, may perhaps in time convince them of their error, and so far operate on their sensibility as to induce them to pay more attention to their true interests. If so, they will then perceive, that they injure themselves by committing such outrages against humanity; and if they do not become the benefactors of their slaves, they will at least cease to be their executioners. They will even perhaps resolve to set free those mothers, who have reared a certain number of children; and as the allurements of liberty are the most powerful motive that can influence the human heart, the negro women, animated by the hope of so great a blessing, to which all would aspire, yet few be able to obtain, would be filled with a virtuous emulation to bring up their offspring, whose number and preservation would secure them freedom and tranquillity.

Having taken proper measures to secure to their plantations, those succours arising from the natural fruitfulness of the negro women, the planters will next

* These reasonings relative to the negroes, are chiefly borrowed from the abbé Raynal: but who can consider a subject after so philosophic a writer, without being enlightened?

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attend to the care of conducting, and extending cultivation, by means of population, and without foreign expedients. Every thing invites them to establish this natural system. The settlements of some powers daily acquire extent, and manual labour increases over all the West India islands. Africa, where all Europeans go to recruit the population of their colonies, daily furnishes them with fewer negroes, and supplies them with worse men, and at a higher price. This source for obtaining slaves will be gradually more and more exhausted. But allowing that no such change in trade should take place, which is granting a great deal too much, as it seems neither distant nor uncertain, the state of the question will not be materially altered. A great number of the slaves brought from Africa perish in their passage, or immediately on their arrival in the New World; they are sold there at a very advanced price; few of them live long; and those who attain a wretched old age, being accustomed from their infancy to idleness, are frequently so ignorant as to be altogether unfit for the employments to which they are destined: they live in a continued state of despondency, on account of the severity of their toils, and their separation from their country and kindred; whereas cultivators born in the West Indies, always breathing their native air, and habituated to labour by their parents in early life, would acquire a particular aptitude for all the useful arts, and be in all respects superior to slaves transported from a distant country, and doomed to a state of perpetual exile and restraint.

The method of substituting in the place of foreign negroes those of the colonies themselves, is very obvious. It wholly consists in superintending the black children that are born in the West Indies, and in moderating the servitude of their mothers, as well as of such female slaves as are likely to prove breeders. It will also be necessary to require such navigators as frequent the coasts of Africa to form their cargo of an equal number of men and women; or even of a greater number of women, during some years, in order to reduce that disproportion which obtains between the two sexes. This last precaution, by putting the pleasures of love within the reach of all the blacks, would contribute to their speedy multiplication. Those unhappy men, forgetting the weight of their chains, would with transport see themselves renewed in their offspring. The majority of them are faithful, even till death, to those negro women whom love and slavery have assigned as their companions. They treat them with that compassion which the unfortunate mutually derive from each other, even in the rigour of their condition: they comfort them under the load of their toils; they sympathize at least with them, when through excess of labour or want of food, the mother can only offer her child a breast that is dry, or moistened but with her tears. The women on their part, though under no restrictions in regard to chastity, are inviolable in their attachments, unless when seduced by the vanity of being beloved by white men:—and unhappily this is a temptation, to which they have too often an opportunity of yielding.

Those who have inquired into the causes of this taste for black women, which appears so depraved in Europeans, have ascribed it to the nature of the climate,

mate, which under the torrid zone irresistibly impells men to the pleasures of love; to the facility of gratifying this violent inclination without restraint, and without the trouble of a long pursuit; to a certain captivating attraction of beauty discoverable in black women, as soon as custom has reconciled the eye to their colour; but more especially to a warmth of constitution, which gives those females the power of provoking and of returning the most ardent caresses. Thus they in some sense revenge themselves for the humiliating dependence of their condition, by the enslaving passions which they excite in their masters: nor do the women of gallantry in Europe possess in a more exalted degree, the art of wasting, or running out a large fortune, than those Africans; but the European ladies are vastly inferior to these sable Cleopatras, in the passion which they feel for those who share their embraces. The fortunate discovery, and prevention of conspiracies, which would have avenged the wrongs of their unhappy countrymen, have often been owing to the tender attachment of the negro women.

These insurrections discover the danger of introducing such a race of men into the New World, and at the same time point out the necessity of either augmenting the proportion of white men, or of conciliating the affections of the negroes. Neither of these appear to be impracticable. The first may be effected by a desirable change in the mode of husbandry, and the second in a great measure accomplished, by attending to the foregoing observations relative to the treatment of the slaves. Other indulgencies might be added: some medium might be found between perfect liberty and absolute slavery, in which might be placed all mulattoes, after a certain limited servitude, to the owner of the mother, and all blacks born in the islands, who should deserve it by their industry. Such of these unhappy men as should thus, or in any other manner, recover their independency, would live in quiet upon the same manual labours, which would then be free and advantageous to them. This sufficiently appears by the conduct of such blacks as have had their fetters broken: they assiduously clear the small plantations that have been given them, or which they have acquired by their industry. By gradually conferring liberty on the negroes born in the colonies, and also occasionally on others, as a reward for their regularity, fidelity, and assiduity, our planters will never want labourers, who being eased of their chains, will be more active and robust:—and by an alteration in the method of husbandry, which seems eligible on its own account, fewer hands will be required.

The soil of the islands in the American archipelago hath little in common with ours. Its productions are very different, as well as the manner of cultivating them. Except some pot-herbs, nothing is sown there: every thing is planted. Tobacco, the roots of which do not strike deep, being the first production that was cultivated, a simple harrow was found sufficient to prepare the lands for its reception, and extirpate the noxious weeds that would have choaked it; but when more troublesome cultures began to be attempted, the hoe was made use of for working and weeding. It was not, however, employed over the whole extent of the field. It was thought enough to dig a hole for the reception of the

the plant. The inequality of the ground, most commonly full of hillocks, probably gave rise to that mode of culture. It might be apprehended that the rains, which there always fall in torrents, would destroy, by the cavities they make, the lands that had been turned up. Indolence, and the indigence of the first planters, extended this practice to the most level plains; and custom, which too often usurps the right both of law and reason, gave a sanction to it. But as the ideas of men became more enlightened, some planters, adventurous enough to discard former prejudices, not only turned up the whole land, but made trial of the plough, as a more expeditious implement for that purpose; and as this method has every circumstance in its favour that can be desired, it is probable that it will become general, wherever it is practicable.

All the lands in the West India islands were virgin lands, when the Europeans took possession of them. The first that were cultivated have, for a long time, yielded less produce than they did in the beginning. Those which have been successively cleared, are likewise more or less exhausted in proportion to the period of their first cultivation. Whatever their fertility originally may have been, they lose it in process of time, and will soon cease to requite the labours of those who cultivate them, if art is not called in to assist nature. It is a principle of agriculture generally admitted by naturalists, that the earth becomes fertile only in proportion as it can receive the influence of the air, and of all those meteors which are directed by this powerful agent, such as fogs, dews, and rains. Continual labour only can procure it this advantage. The land in the West Indies particularly requires such a process. The wet season must be chosen for turning up those grounds, the dryness of which would be an impediment to fertility. Ploughing can be attended with no inconveniency in lands that are level. One might even perhaps prevent the danger of having shelving grounds destroyed by storms, by making furrows traversely, on a line which should cross that of the slope of the hillocks. If the declivity were so steep that the cultivated land could be carried away notwithstanding the furrows, small drains, something deeper, might be added for the same purpose at particular distances, which would break the force and velocity that the steepness of the hills adds to the fall of heavy rains.

The utility of the plough would not be merely limited to the producing of a greater proportion of the vegetable juice in plants, it would also make their produce more certain. The West India islands are the regions of insects. Their multiplication is there favoured by a constant heat; and one race succeeds another without interruption. The pernicious ravages they make are well known. Frequent and successive ploughing would check the progress of this devouring race; disturb their reproduction; kill many of them, and destroy the greater part of their eggs. The use of the plough would probably be attended with a further advantage: it would introduce the custom of manuring, already known on the coast. The manure there employed is a kind of sea-plant, named *varrech*; which, when ripe, is detached from the rocks and sands, and thrown on the shore by the waves. It is productive of great fertility; but if employed with-

out previous preparation, it communicates to the sugar a disagreeable bitterness, which must arise from the salts impregnated with oily particles abounding in sea-plants. In order to take off this bitter taste, it would only perhaps be necessary to burn the plant, and make use of the ashes. Detached by this operation from the oily particles, and triturated by vegetation, the salts would circulate more freely in the sugar cane, and impart to it purer juices.

The interior parts of the country have not till lately been dunged. Necessity will make this practice become more general; and in time the soil of the West Indies will be assisted by the same methods of cultivation as that of Europe, tho' with more difficulty. As the herds of cattle are there less numerous, and little use is made of stables, it will be necessary to have recourse to other kinds of manure, and to multiply them as much as possible, in order to compensate the inferiority of quality by the quantity. The greatest resource will be found in the weeds, from which useful plants must constantly be freed, and which grow most exuberantly in that country. These should be collected together in heaps, and left to rot. The planters who cultivate coffee have set an example of this practice, but with that degree of indolence which the heat of the climate occasions in all manual labour. A pile of weeds is heaped up at the bottom of the coffee-trees; but without consulting, whether these weeds, which they do not even take the trouble of covering with earth, may not heat the tree, and harbour the insects that prey upon it. They have been equally negligent in the management of their cattle.

All the domestic animals of Europe were imported into America by the Spaniards, and from their settlements the colonies of other nations have been chiefly supplied. Excepting hogs, which are found to thrive best in countries abounding with aquatic productions, with insects and reptiles, all these animals have degenerated. Though the hotness of the climate may contribute something to this degeneracy, the want of care is perhaps its principal cause. The animals always lie in the open field, and have never either bran or oats given them: they are at grass the whole year. The colonists have not even taken the trouble of dividing their pastures into separate portions, in order that their cattle may occasionally pass from the one to the other, that new grass may have time to spring up. They always feed on the same spot. Such pastures can only yield weak and watery juices: too quick a vegetation prevents them from being properly ripened; hence the animals designed for the food of man afford only flesh that is tough and flabby.

Those animals which are destined for labour do but very little service. The oxen draw but light loads, and that only for a part of the day. They are not stimulated by the goad, but driven by a whip: where the roads do not admit of carriages, mules are employed instead of them. These carry, at most, but half the weight that European horses can bear, and go over but half the ground in the same time. The pace of the West India horses is not so slow: they have preserved something of the fleetness, fire, and docility of those of Andalusia, from which they derive their pedigree; but their strength is not answerable to

BOOK III. their spirit. Two of them must be harnessed to a very light carriage, which could easily be drawn by one in Europe. This degeneracy of the animals in the West Indies might have been prevented, retarded, or diminished, if care had been taken to renew them by a foreign race. Stallions brought from colder countries, would in some degree have corrected the influence of the climate, food, and rearing. With the mares of the country, they would have produced a new breed far superior to the present.

It is very extraordinary that so simple an idea should never have occurred to any of the planters, and that there has been no legislature attentive enough to its interests, to substitute in its colonies the bison for the common ox. Every one who is acquainted with this animal, must recollect that the bison has a softer skin, a disposition less dull and stupid than our bullock, and a quickness and docility far superior. It is swift in running; and when mounted can supply the place of a horse. It thrives as well in southern countries, as the ox, which we employ, does in cold or temperate climates. The bison is only known in Africa and the East Indies. If custom had not a tyrannical influence, even over the wisest governments, they would have been sensible that this useful animal was singularly well adapted to the great archipelago of America, and that it could be exported at a very small expence, along with the negroes, from the coast of Angola.

But though the Europeans have been so negligent in regard to an animal, which, being a native of the same country, might have lightened the labours of these unhappy men, considerable attention has been paid to their original food. From Africa has been transplanted a shrub, which grows in the West Indies to the height of four feet, lives four years, and is useful throughout its whole duration. It bears husks which contain five or six grains of a species of very wholesome and very nourishing pea. Every part belonging to this shrub is remarkable for some particular virtue. Its blossom is an antidote against a cough; its leaves, when boiled, are successfully applied to wounds; and even of the ashes of the stem or branches, is made a lixivium, which cleanses ulcers, and dissipates external inflammations of the skin. It is called the Angola pea, and flourishes equally in lands naturally barren, and in those whose salts have been exhausted. On this account, the best managers among the colonists never fail to sow it on those parts of their estates, which would otherwise remain uncultivated.

The most valuable present, however, which the West Indies have received from Africa, is the manioc. Most historians have considered this plant as a native of America, without giving us any reasons for such an opinion. But were the truth of it demonstrated, the West India islands would yet stand indebted for the manioc to the Europeans, who imported it thither along with the negroes, who fed upon it in their own country. Before the arrival of the Spaniards, the intercourse between the continent of America and the islands was so trifling, that a production of the former might be unknown in the latter. It is certain at least that the savages, who presented to the first navigators bananas, yams,

yams, and potatoes *, offered them no manioc; that the Caribs in Dominica and St. Vincent's had it from us; that the character of the savages did not fit them to conduct a culture requiring so much attention; that this culture can only be carried on in very open fields, and that in the forests, with which these islands were overgrown, there were no clear and unencumbered spaces of ground above an hundred feet square. In short, it is beyond a doubt, that the use of the manioc was not known till after the arrival of the negroes, and that from time immemorial it hath constituted the principal food of the inhabitants of a great part of Africa.

The manioc is a plant that is propagated by slips. It is set in furrows five or six inches deep, which are filled with the same earth that had been dug out. These furrows are at the distance of two feet, or two feet and an half from each other, according to the nature of the ground. The shrub rises a little above six feet, and its trunk is about the thickness of a man's arm. In proportion as it grows the lower leaves fall off, and only a few remain towards the top. Its wood is tender and brittle. It requires a dry and light soil: its fruit is at its root; and if that root is shaken by the motion which the wind gives to the body of the plant, the fruit is formed but imperfectly. It takes eighteen months to arrive at maturity. This fruit is not fit for human food, till after it has undergone a tedious preparation. Its first skin must be scraped off: it must be washed, rasped, and pressed, in order to extract the aqueous parts, which contain a slow poison, against which there is no remedy known. Roasting dissipates, by evaporation, every noxious particle which it might still retain. When there appears no more steam, it is taken off the iron plate, on which it was roasted, and suffered to cool. Repeated experiments have shewn, that it is almost as dangerous to eat it hot as to eat it raw.

The root of the manioc grated, and reduced into little grains by roasting, is called flour of manioc. The paste of manioc, converted into a cake by roasting, without moving it, is called cassada. It would be dangerous to eat as much cassada as flour of manioc, because the former is less roasted. Both keep a long time, and are very nourishing, but a little difficult of digestion. Though this food seems at first insipid, there are many white people who afterwards prefer it to the best wheat bread. The Spaniards in general use it constantly. The French feed their slaves with it. The other European nations, who have settlements in the islands, are little acquainted with the manioc. They depend on North America chiefly for their subsistence; so that if all intercourse with that fertile country were to be obstructed, only for a few months, they would be exposed to the greatest inconveniencies. Hence the distress of the British West Indies since the

* The banana in shape, size, and colour, resembles a cucumber. Its taste is somewhat similar to that of a pear. It grows in cool places, on a soft and spongy stem, about seven feet high. This stem decays as the fruit ripens; but before it falls, it shoots forth a young sprig from its trunk, which a year after produces its fruit, perishes in its turn, and is successively regenerated in the same manner. The yam is a root somewhat resembling the potato, which is also a native of America.

BOOK III. interruption of that intercourse, in consequence of the present unhappy contest between the mother-country and the colonies.

An avidity which knows no bounds, hath made the West India planters insensible of this danger. They find their advantage in turning the whole industry of their slaves towards those productions which are the objects of commerce. The chief of these are cacao, coffee, indigo, cotton, and sugar. We have already had occasion to speak of the cultivation of the three first articles : cotton shall afterwards be considered : at present we shall confine ourselves to the culture of sugar, whose single produce is alone more considerable than all the rest. It is the grand staple of the West Indies.

The cane that yields the sugar is a kind of reed, which commonly rises to the height of eight or nine feet, including the leaves that grow out of the top of it. Its usual thickness is from two to four inches. It is covered with a pretty hard rind, which incloses a spongy substance full of juice, to the palate the most agreeable and least cloying sweet in nature. It is intersected at intervals with joints, which serve as it were to strengthen and support it; but without impeding the circulation of the sap, as they are soft and pithy in the inside. This plant hath been cultivated from the earliest antiquity in some countries of Asia and Africa, though sugar appears to have been unknown to the enlightened Greeks and Romans. About the middle of the twelfth century, it was introduced into Sicily, whence it passed to the southern provinces of Spain. It was afterwards transplanted into Madeira and the Canaries; and from these islands it was conveyed, as we have already seen *, to the West Indies, where it thrives as well as if it had been originally a native of the New World.

All soils, however, are not equally proper for the sugar-cane. Such as are rich and strong, low, and marshy, environed with woods, or lately cleared produce only a juice that is aqueous, insipid, and of a bad quality, difficult to be boiled, purified, or preserved. A light, porous, and deep soil is most favourable to this production. The general method of cultivating it is to prepare a large field, and make at the distance of three feet from one another, furrows eighteen inches long, twelve broad, and six deep; to lay in every one of these two, and sometimes three slips of about a foot long, taken from the upper part of the cane, and to cover them lightly with earth. From each of the joints in these slips issues a stem, which in time becomes a sugar-cane. Care should be taken to clear the infant plant constantly from the weeds, which never fail to grow round it. This labour need only be continued for six months, as the canes are then sufficiently thick and near one another to destroy every weed that might be prejudicial to them. They are commonly suffered to grow sixteen or eighteen months. Then they are found most fully to answer the purpose of the planter; for if they remain longer in the ground they yield less juice, though that deficiency is somewhat compensated by its superior richness.

* Book I. chap. iii. p. 42.

The planters generally divide their cane grounds into three portions, in order to enable them to furnish sugar as frequently as possible for the market. One of these is of standing canes, fit to cut that season; the second of new-planted canes; and the third of fallow, ready to receive a fresh supply. From the old stocks, also issue suckers, which are ready, in their turn, to be cut fourteen or fifteen months after the former crop. This second cutting yields only half the produce of the first. Some planters make a third, and even a fourth cutting; but they are always successively less, however good the soil. Nothing therefore but want of hands for hoeing afresh, can induce a planter to reap more than two crops from his cane.

These crops are not made over all the West Indies at the same time. In the Spanish, Danish, and Dutch settlements, they begin in January, and continue till October. This method does not imply any fixed season for the maturity of the sugar-cane. That plant, however, like others, must have its progress; and it has been generally observed to be in flower in the months of November and December. From the custom these nations have adopted of continuing to gather crops for ten months without intermission, they must cut some canes that are not sufficiently ripe, and others that are too ripe, and then the juice has not the requisite qualities. The time of gathering should be at a fixed season, and probably the months of March and April are fittest for that purpose; because all the sweet fruits are ripe about that time, while the four ones do not arrive at a state of maturity till the months of July and August. The English cut their canes in March and April; but they are not induced to this practice merely by reasonings on its propriety. The rains that fall in the British West Indies in August and September render that season proper for planting; and as the canes are eighteen months in arriving at maturity, March and April come accidentally to be the season of reaping.

The canes are cut with a kind of hatchet, and immediately carried in bundles to the mill; where they are bruised by iron rollers, while the juice runs into a vat, placed under the rollers to receive it. From this vat it is carried through a pipe into a great reservoir; in which, however, it is not suffered to remain long, lest it should turn sour, but is conveyed by other pipes, into the boiling-house, where it is received by a large caldron. Here it remains until a moderate fire has made it throw up its first scum. When it has lost this gross substance, it is made to run into a second, a third, and even a fourth boiler, whose fire is three times stronger than that of the first, and where it becomes of a thick clammy consistence. Mere boiling is incapable of carrying it further: in order to advance the process, a small quantity of lime-water is therefore poured into the caldron, which raises the liquor into a very violent fermentation. After this subsides, the sugar is taken out, and placed in a cooler, where it dries, granulates, and becomes fit to be put into the pots, which is the last part of the process. These pots are made of earth, and of a conical figure. The base of the cone is entirely open, and its top has a hole, over which is put a strainer. Through this strainer the syrup, molasses, or treacle part disengages itself from the sugar, which

III. remains in that state in which it generally arrives here in hogheads, like a light sand, of a yellowish brown colour.

The greater part of the West India islands voluntarily leave to the Europeans, or are obliged by heavy duties to leave to them, the care of giving sugar the other preparations which render it fit for the more delicate uses. This practice spares the expence of large buildings; leaves the planters more negroes to employ in agriculture; allows them to make their cultures without any interruption for two or three months together, and employs a greater number of ships, belonging to the mother country, for exportation, as well as more sugar-bakers in Europe. The French planters alone manage their sugars in another manner. That process merits a particular description.

To whatever degree of purity the juice of the sugar-cane may be boiled, there always remains an infinite number of foreign particles attached to the salts of the sugar, in regard to which they appear to be what lees are to wine. These give it a dead colour, and the taste of tartar, of which the French planters endeavour to deprive it, by an operation called *claying*. This consists in putting again the raw sugars into another earthen vessel, in all respects similar to that already mentioned. The surface of the sugar, throughout the whole extent of the base of the cone, is then covered with a white clay, on which water is poured. In filtering it thro' this clay, the water carries with it part of a calcareous earth, which it finds upon the different saline particles. The water is afterwards drained off through the opening at the top of the mould, and a second syrup is procured, which is so much the worse, in proportion as the sugar is finer. The claying is followed by the last preparation, which is effected by fire, and serves for the evaporating of the moisture with which the salts were impregnated, during the former process. For this purpose, the sugar is taken in its whole form out of the conical vessel of earth, and conveyed into a stove, which receives from an iron furnace a gentle and gradual heat. In that stove the sugar is left till it becomes quite dry, which commonly happens at the end of three weeks.—Though the expence attending this process is generally useless, as the clayed sugar is commonly refined in Europe in the same manner as the raw, yet most of the planters in the French islands take this trouble*: and to a nation whose navy is weak, such a method is extremely advantageous in time of war, as it enables the colonies to convey their produce to the mother-country in a smaller number of ships.

One may judge from these different kinds of sugar, but best from that which has been clayed, of what sort of salts it is composed. If the ground where the cane has been planted is hard, strong, and sloping, the salts will be white, angular, and very large. If the soil is clayey, the colour will be the same; but the granulations, being cut on fewer sides, will reflect less light. If the soil is rich and spongy, the granulations will be nearly spherical; the colour will be dusky, and the sugar will slip under the finger, without any unequal feeling. This last kind of sugar is considered as the worst. Be the reason what it may, those places that

* Raynal, liv. xi.

have a northern aspect produce the best sugar, and clayey grounds yield the greatest quantity. The preparations which the sugar that grows in these two kinds of soil require, are less tedious and troublesome than those required by the sugar produced in a rich land. But these observations, which glance at a subject, whose investigation is properly the province of chymists, or speculative planters, admit of infinite latitude in application.

Besides sugar, the cane, as already observed, furnishes syrup, whose value is about a twelfth of that of the sugars. The best syrup is that which runs from the first vessel into the second, when the raw sugar is made. It is composed of the grosser particles, which carry along with them the salts of sugar. The syrup of an inferior kind, which is more bitter, and less in quantity, is formed by the water which carries off the tartareous and earthy particles of the sugar when it is clayed. Both these kinds are carried into the north of Europe, where the people use them instead of butter and sugar. In North America the same use is made of them, and they are further employed to give an agreeable taste to a liquor called *Pilus*, which is only an infusion of the bark of a tree. But this syrup is made still more useful by means of the secret that has been discovered of converting it into a spirituous liquor, which the English call *Rum*, and the French *Taffa*. The process, which is very simple, is begun by mixing a third part of syrup with two-thirds of water. When these two substances have sufficiently fermented, which commonly happens at the end of twelve or fifteen days, they are put into a clean alembic, and the distillation is performed in the usual manner.

Such is the method which, after many experiments and variations, all the islands have adopted in the cultivation of sugar. It is undoubtedly a good one; but perhaps it hath not attained that degree of perfection of which it will admit. If, for experiment, instead of planting canes in large fields, the ground were parcelled out into divisions of sixty feet, leaving between every two planted divisions a space of land uncultivated, such a method would probably be attended with great advantages. In the present practice, none but the canes which grow on the borders are good, or attain to a proper degree of maturity. Those in the middle of the field in part miscarry, and ripen badly, because they are deprived of a current of air, which only acts by its weight, and seldom gets to the foot of such canes as are covered with leaves. According to the proposed system of planting, those partitions of land which had not been cultivated, would be highly favourable to production, when the crop of the planted divisions had been made, which would be left in their turn to recover: it is therefore probable, that by this new method as much sugar might be obtained one year with another, as by the established practice; and with this additional advantage, that it would require fewer slaves to cultivate it.

It is chiefly by the produce of sugar that the West India islands supply their inhabitants with all the articles of elegance and conveniency. They draw from Europe flour, liquors, salt provisions, silks, linens, hardware—in a word, every thing that is necessary for apparel, food, furniture, ornament, and luxury.

BOOK III. ury. Their consumptions of all kinds are prodigious, and must necessarily influence their manners. This leads us naturally to a new inquiry.

All the Europeans who have been transplanted into the islands of the American archipelago, must no less have degenerated, it should seem, than the animals which they carried thither. The climate doubtless influences all living creatures; but men being less immediately subject to the laws of nature, resist her influence the more, because they are the only beings who act for themselves. The first colonists who settled in the West Indies, corrected the influence of a new climate, and a new soil, by the conveniences which it was in their power to derive from a commerce that was always open with their former country. They learned to lodge and maintain themselves in a manner the best adapted to their change of situation. They retained the customs arising from their education, and every thing that could agree with the natural effects of the new air they breathed. With these, they carried into America the food and manners of Europe, and familiarized to each other beings and productions which nature had widely separated. The most salutary of the primitive customs was perhaps that of mingling and dividing the two races by intermarriages.

All civilized nations have prohibited an union of sexes between the children of the same parents, and nature has generally dictated the same law to barbarians. Persons brought up together in infancy, accustomed to see one another continually, rather contract, in this mutual familiarity, that indifference which arises from habit, than that lively and impetuous sensation of sympathy, which suddenly affects two young persons who never saw each other, or who but seldom have that pleasure. If hunger in the savage life disunites families, love forms new associations, by connecting the individuals of different families. The natural advantage of crossing the breed among men as well as animals, in order to preserve the species from degenerating, is the result of slow experience, and is posterior to the acknowledged utility of connecting families, in order to cement the peace of society. Sovereigns soon discovered how far it was proper for them to separate or connect their subjects, in order to keep them in a state of dependence. They formed men into distinct ranks, by availing themselves of their prejudices; because this line of division between them became a bond of submission to the sovereign, who maintained his authority by means of their mutual hatred and opposition. They connected families to each other in every station; because this union totally extinguished every spark of dissention repugnant to the spirit of civil society.

Thus it appears, that the intermixture of pedigrees and families by marriage, has been rather the result of political institutions, than of any scheme formed upon the intention of nature. But whatever may have been the origin of this custom, it has been adopted from a mixture of inclination and moral necessity, by the Europeans desirous of propagating their species in the West Indies. An European generally marries a Creole, or a Creole an European, whom chance or family connexions has brought into the New World. From this happy association has been formed a particular race, marked by certain cha-

rafteristics, which, in the two worlds, distinguish the man born under the sky of the New, of parents originally natives of both *.

The Creoles are in general well made. There is scarce a single person among them afflicted with those deformities which are so common in other countries. Their complexion, however, never has that air of vivacity and freshness, which often contributes more to beauty than regular features. Their colour, even when in health, resembles that of persons just recovering from a fit of sickness. Their intrepidity in war has been signalized by a series of bold actions. They would be equal to any soldiers in the world, if they were more capable of being disciplined. History does not record any of those instances of cowardice, treachery, or meanness among them, which fill the annals of all nations. It can hardly be alledged, that a Creole ever did a mean action. All strangers, without exception, find in the West Indies, the most friendly and generous hospitality. Their natural propensity to beneficence banishes avarice; so that they are just in their dealings. They are strangers to dissimulation, craft, and suspicion. The pride they take in their frankness, the high opinion they have of their own character, together with their extreme vivacity, exclude from their commercial transactions all that mystery and reserve, which stifle natural goodness of disposition, extinguish the social spirit, and diminish our sensibility. But with all these good qualities, the Creoles are restless in temper, and inconstant in taste. A warm imagination perpetually hurries them into new pleasures and projects, to which they sacrifice both their fortune and their health.

The sultry air of the West Indies deprives the women of that lively colour, which is esteemed the chief beauty of their sex. But they have an agreeable and fair complexion, and the climate does not deprive their eyes of that vivacity and power, which enable the look to convey an irresistible impression to the soul. They are very prolific, and often mothers of ten or twelve children. This fertility arises from love, which strongly attaches them to their husbands; but no sooner is a husband removed by death, than the same passion throws them instantly into the arms of another. Jealous even to distraction, they are seldom unfaithful. An indolence, which makes them neglect even the means of pleasing; the taste which the men have for negro women; their own manner of life, which precludes the opportunities or temptations to gallantry, are so many supports to their virtue.

The solitary manner in which the Creole women live in their houses gives them an air of extreme timidity, that embarrasses them in their intercourse with the world. They lose, even in early life, the spirit of emulation and rivalry; and this prevents them from cultivating their mental faculties. They appear to have neither power nor taste for any thing but dancing, which seems to inspire them with new souls. This passion animates them through-

* By the word *natives* the reader must not here understand Indians, but persons born in the New World, though of European extraction, and those actually born in Europe. By the word *originally* the author means only to mark the first connexion between two such persons, in contradistinction to those formed by their descendants, who are nevertheless supposed to partake of its happy effects.

BOOK III.

their whole life. They either retain to the last some share of their youthful sensibility, or are stimulated by the recollection of it. From such a constitution arises an extremely sympathising temper. But these ladies, who cannot bear the sight of misery, are at the same time very rigid and tyrannical in regard to those offices which they require of their domestics. Nay, so distinct is weakness from real humanity, that, more despotic and inexorable than even their husbands, they feel no remorse in ordering chastisements, the severity of which would be a punishment and a lesson to them, were they either obliged to fulfil their own commands, or to be witness to the execution of them.

From this absolute dominion over the negroes, the Creoles derive an imperious manner, which makes their company be little relished in Europe. Accustomed from their earliest infancy to see a number of tall stout men about them, whose business it is to conjecture and anticipate their wishes, they insensibly imbibe the most extravagant opinion of their own consequence. Seldom meeting with any opposition to their will, though ever so unreasonable, they assume a domineering air, and look down with disdain on the bulk of mankind. No man is so insolent as he who always lives with his inferiors. But when these happen to be slaves, habituated to wait upon children, to dread even their cries, which must expose them to punishment, what must masters become, who have never obeyed! wicked men, who have never been punished, and madmen, who to gratify caprice, are accustomed to put their fellow creatures in irons!

An exercise of tyranny so cruel and wanton, accompanied with so humble a submission, gives the West Indians that arrogance which must necessarily be detested in every European country, where a greater equality prevailing among mankind, teaches them a greater share of mutual respect. Educated without knowing either pain or labour, the Creoles are neither able to surmount difficulties, nor to bear contradiction. Nature hath given them every advantage, and fortune denies them nothing. In this respect, like Eastern monarchs, they are unhappy because they have nothing to desire. If the climate did not strongly excite them to love, they would be ignorant of every real pleasure of the soul; and yet they seldom have the happiness of experiencing those passions, which, thwarted by obstacles and refusals, are nourished with tears, and gratified with virtue. If they were not confined by the laws of Europe, which govern them by means of their wants, and repress or restrain the extraordinary degree of independency which they enjoy, they would sink into a state of softness and effeminacy that would in time render them the victims of their own tyranny, or would involve them in a state of anarchy that would subvert all the foundations of their policy.

Nature seems to have destined the inhabitants of the West Indies to a greater share of happiness than those of Europe. There such diseases as the gout, gravel, apoplexies, pleurisies, complaints of the chest, and the various diseases occasioned by winter are scarcely known. If the air of the country can be withstood, and the middle age attained to, a long life, and an old age free from those infirmities which affect it in our climate, is almost certain. But the West Indies are not without their peculiar maladies. New born infants are attacked with a

disease which seems peculiar to the torrid zone. It is called *tetanus*; and if a child receives the impression of the air or wind, if the room in which it is born happens to be exposed to smoke—to too much heat or cold, the disorder shews itself directly. It first seizes the jaw, which becomes rigid, and fixed, so as not to be opened. This spasm soon communicates itself to the other parts of the body, and the child dies for want of being able to take nourishment. The fair sex, naturally weak and delicate, are subject in these islands to an almost total decay of strength; an unconquerable aversion against all kind of wholesome food, and an irregular craving after every thing that is prejudicial to their health. This disease is a true cachexy, which commonly terminates in a dropfy. The men, more robust, are liable to more violent complaints. In this region of heat they are exposed to a burning and malignant fever, known under different names, and indicated by hæmorrhages. It is so violent, that, in the first twenty four hours, the patient must be bled sixteen or eighteen times. Hence a person is no sooner seized with one of these fevers, than the physician, the lawyer, and the priest, are called to his bed-side.

Almost all the Europeans who go over to the West Indies are exposed to this danger, and frequently the Creoles themselves, on their return from more temperate climates. But it never attacks women, who have the natural evacuations, nor negroes, who born under a hotter sky, are inured by nature, and prepared by free perspiration, for all the ferments that the sun can produce. These violent fevers are certainly owing to the heat of the sun, whose rays are more direct, and whose influence is more constant than in our climates. This heat must undoubtedly thicken the blood through the excess of perspiration, a want of elasticity in the solids, and a dilatation of the vessels by the impulse of the fluids.

Many of these inconveniencies might however be prevented, if persons going to the West Indies were purged and bled in their passage, as they approached the torrid zone; and if on their arrival in the islands, the same precautions were repeated, and recourse had to the cold bath. But instead of such expedients, the inhabitants commonly give into those excesses which are most likely to hasten the disorder; and strangers encouraged by the example of the Creoles, by the entertainments to which they are invited, the pleasures they partake of, and the kind reception they meet with, indulge in the general jollity. Feasting, gaming, dancing, drinking, and frequently the chagrin of disappointment in their chimerical expectations, conspire to add to the ferment of an immoderate heat of blood, which soon becomes inflamed. With such indulgence it is scarce possible to resist the heat of a climate, where the greatest precautions are not always sufficient to secure even sober persons from the attack of those dangerous fevers. In the present state of the West Indies, of ten men that go to those islands, four English die; three Frenchmen, three Dutchmen, three Danes, and one Spaniard*.

When it was observed how many men perished in those regions, at the time of their first settlement, it was generally supposed that the states which had esta-

* Raynal, liv. xi.

blished colonies there, would gradually be depopulated. Experience, however, hath altered the public opinion on this point. In proportion as these colonies have extended their plantations, their produce has increased: they have been furnished with the means of procuring new luxuries and conveniencies, and have opened to the mother-countries new sources of consumption. An increase in exports could not take place without an increase of labour. This labour has brought together a great number of men, which will ever be the case, where the means of subsistence are multiplied. Even foreigners have resorted in multitudes to those parent-states, which opened a vast field to their ambition and industry.

Population has not only increased among the proprietors of the islands, but the people in such states have also become more happy. Our felicity is in general proportioned to our conveniencies, and it must increase as we can vary and extend them. The islands have been productive of this advantage to their possessors, who have drawn from those fertile regions a number of commodities, the consumption of which have added to their enjoyments; and they have acquired some, which when exchanged for others among their neighbours, have made them partake of the luxuries of other countries. Hence the kingdoms and states, which by fortunate circumstances, or well combined projects, have acquired the chief possession of the islands, are become the residence of the arts, and of all those polite amusements, which are the natural and necessary consequences of great plenty and prosperity.

Nor is this all. These colonies have raised the nations that established them to a superiority of influence in the political world: they have made them the arbiters of peace and war. In what proportion each nation has increased its political consequence, by its possessions in the West Indies, will appear from a survey of the islands belonging to the different European powers.





